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Motto: 1. Cor. 3, 22-23.
Πάντα ὑμῶν ἐστίν, ὑμεῖς δὲ Χριστοῦ.

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NEW LIFE IN JAPANESE BUDDHISM

By Theophil Menzel

Many people, when they hear of something pertaining to the Orient, shrug their shoulders complacently and repeat Kipling's misleading dictum that "East is East, and West is West and never the twain shall meet." The fact of the matter is that our own interests are so provincial that the East and the West are never related to each other in our minds. Our system of education almost ignores the fact that the larger portion of the earth's population lives in the Orient. When we study philosophy we are unaware of the fact that the oldest philosophers originated in the East. When we study theology we forget the fact that every one of the world religions were born in Asia. If we turn to current events we eagerly read about Lloyd George, Huey Long, Adolph Hitler and Mussolini. But when the history of our century is written, some of the names that shall be written in large letters because of their permanent importance, are names from the East like Gandhi, Kagawa, Sun Yat Sen, and Hu Shih. Asia is becoming an area of striking personalities.

It is a symptom of small-town mindedness to assert that East and West shall never meet. If Kipling meant that East and West were failing to understand each other, then it might be said that it is high time that we attempt to understand each other for the same things that strike the West are striking the East, and if we are experiencing an acute attack of social indigestion, the East is even more sorely stricken by the difficulties of facing up to a new type of life. We groan about the difficulties of adjusting our thinking to the changes in science during the last generation. Yet Asia has a much more difficult ordeal. The Orient has had to face more adjustments in two generations than we have had to face in the entire period since the Renaissance of the 15th century. Our sci-

ence has merely moved on in a logical progression—Asia's science must be entirely reconstructed on a new basis. We think that we are to be pitied because our social institutions are suffering growing pains—Asia's social institutions are in many cases collapsing—and a gigantic task of social construction stares the Orient in the face. We become excited when the Democrats succeed the Republicans, but what would we say if we, like the people of China, had to make a sudden adjustment after the collapse of a political system which had existed for several thousand years? The East and West are different—not because they are facing different problems, but because the problems of the East are much more accentuated than our own.

In another respect East and West are not nearly so far apart as we usually assume. The world has become a neighborhood. All religions have become neighbors. Christianity has sent messengers to every section of the Orient. But Asia is beginning to reply. Every Oriental religion has its ambassadors in America and Europe. Buddhist monasteries have been erected in Switzerland, Germany, America and other countries. The Mohammedans are doing a missionary work among the American negroes which shall one day make us take notice. Hindu swamis speak over our radios. In less noticeable fashion the East is speaking to the West through syncretistic cults such as Christian Science, Theosophy, Spiritualism, the Rosicrucians, Bahaism, etc. And no doubt direct missionary work will be carried on as never before by genuine Oriental religions who have more of value than the syncretistic cults which have spread in the past generation. And let us not assume too easily that these religions are only making a last stand before a hopeless collapse. The course of history is strewn with the wreckage of defunct religions but we, who are neither prophets nor prophetic sons, cannot say in advance whether a religion is finished or not. Some remarkable rejuvenations have taken place in history. We have often assumed that certain religions will collapse because of a lack of moral content. Yet it is surprising to see how nearly all of the leading religions are unearthing untapped moral resources. Just as Christianity has partially awakened to the social evils which we face in a competitive capitalist society, so the Oriental religions are in some spots showing a surprising awareness of social evils which have received scant attention in the past.

The Laymen's Report is perfectly correct when it reminds us that all of the religions are facing some common problems. They are all waging a battle on two fronts. The masses in all countries are asking whether religion can do anything to help them in their struggle for existence. Or shall the masses be utterly crushed by a competitive social order? Can religion do anything to insure

a more just distribution of bread? But there is another battle-front, seemingly the opposite, and yet also the same in its search for a more abundant life. All religions are challenged by an attitude which says that man can live by bread alone. We frequently call this "secularism." If our generation becomes convinced that the universe is a machine propelled by blind forces, without purpose or spiritual meaning, then all religions, whether Christian or Buddhist or Mohammedan, will have about as much significance as last year's calendar has for us today.

Japan made its first contact with Buddhism in 522 A. D. when a Chinese monk came to Japan and built a temple there. In 553 a Korean king sent a Buddha-image to the Japanese emperor and from that time on Buddhism gained an increasing hold upon Japanese life. If Shintoism seems crude and dangerously nationalistic to us, let us not forget that there is another side of the religious life of Japan, the side presented by Buddhism. Japanese Buddhism is one of the most interesting and charming areas of the religious life of mankind. One of the great promoters of the growth of Buddhism was Prince Shotoku who reigned in the last half of the sixth century A. D. He is often called the Constantine of Japanese Buddhism. Like most rulers who have promoted the growth of some faith, Shotoku was interested in finding out what this religion could do for the nation. He regarded Buddhism as a pillar of the state and as a means for harmonizing and unifying the social life of the people. Others too soon regarded Buddhism, not merely as a religion for the lonely individual, but as a religion possessed of great potentialities for social solidarity. This new religion did not entirely crowd out Shintoism, but was accepted as an additional insight. Buddhism usually enters a culture, not as a thing which supplants an older religion, but as a supplement to it. In this respect it is quite different from Christianity which has always tried to eliminate the previous religion. Yet it must not be thought that Buddhism was only a secondary annex to Japanese life. It seems to have played the same role in the growing civilization of mediæval Japan as Christianity played in the civilization of the crude peoples of Europe. If Christianity placed an indelible stamp upon the whole culture of Europe, Buddhism did no less for Japan. Buddhism became the sponsor of education, the inspiration of Japan's superb painting, sculpture, and poetry, and the producer of great religious personalities who are an interesting parallel to the great saints, scholars, and reformers of Europe. Like Christianity in Europe Japanese Buddhism also developed a great variety of theologies, it separated into many denominations representing as wide an assortment of religious types as Christianity can show in her denominations. Japanese Buddhism can show its

Quakers and Unitarians, ecclesiastical legalists and thundering reformers, emotionalistic and high-brow intellectual sects, and recently also its fundamentalists and modernists. Thus it is quite as difficult to say anything about Japanese Buddhism which applies to all of its branches as it is to make sweeping statements which apply to all Christian Churches.

No doubt much of Japanese Buddhism is apparently unchanged, especially in the more isolated rural sections. And if you look at the older clergy it will seem quite static. But that is not the whole story. Since the War so many changes have been begun by the younger element that Japanese Buddhism is the most rapidly progressing Buddhist branch in the whole world. There is hardly a thing that Christian groups are doing that has not also been launched in Japanese Buddhist circles in the last decade or two. Much of it is in a crude elementary state, but the energy with which it is undertaken shows that it may revolutionize the whole temper of Buddhism.

Take the matter of the education of the clergy, for example. Pratt ventures the prediction that when the present generation of students reach middle age, the Buddhist clergy of Japan will be on the whole a well educated and intelligent body of men. The intellectual adjustments within Buddhism have not been so difficult as one might expect. If modern critical studies explode many Buddhist traditions concerning the historicity of certain events like the details of the life of Buddha, etc., they are not especially disturbed. If their scriptures are proven to be much later than was supposed, they do not fear for the future of their religion for it never placed much weight upon history or upon a conception like verbal inspiration. And if one author did not write them, then another enlightened man did. The results of the study of comparative religion do not disturb them. Buddhism has always been extremely friendly to other religions and never speaks of others as "false" religions. It has not hesitated in adopting many of the modern methods of work employed in Christianity.

In 1926 there were 6 Japanese universities with departments for the training of priests with 621 students, 16 seminaries of college grade with 1400 students, and 81 other training schools. Let us look for a moment at a modern Buddhist seminary. It is supported by the sect founded by Shinran Shonen, often called the Martin Luther of Japanese Buddhism. This school, which is in Kyoto, has an endowment of 1 million yen and is well equipped. The entrance requirements are as high as those of any seminary in America. There are special students who do not meet the requirements but they are put into a department which is a separate school. Among the courses taught are the history and doctrine of Bud-

dhism, the history of religion, the history of European philosophy, psychology, ethics, pedagogy, sociology, Indian and Chinese Philosophy and literature, European literature, language and economics. The library contains a great number of books that are used in our Western seminaries. The school has over 600 students, 38 full-time professors and 53 part-time instructors from the University of Kyoto. The younger instructors have all had a modern education and many have studied abroad. The faculty members have published some notable studies. Student life is enriched by outside activity very much like the varied life of an American student, with athletics, musical organizations, debating clubs etc. A school of this kind is not a solitary example. To be sure it is one of the best, but 6 other denominations also have schools on this level. And the whole program of theological education is going forward rapidly. Certainly this is going to have a great effect upon the Buddhism of tomorrow.

Another side of an educational revival is the fact that many new editions of the Buddhist scriptures are appearing. A very scholarly edition is being published in 55 volumes. Buddhism is becoming a literate religion for the people.

It is only to be expected that methods of work are rapidly changing. Some of the sects whom we might call "Protestant" in their world-view are beginning to place a great deal of emphasis upon preaching, not only in the temples, but also in prisons, slums, and in the streets. The Sunday school is rapidly becoming an important institution in modern Buddhism. Pratt visited a number of them and reports that they are decidedly modern and efficient in their equipment. Of course it is only the more modern-minded Buddhists who have gone into Sunday school work. In Tokyo more than half of the Buddhist temples had Sunday schools in 1928. In 1920 there were 800,000 pupils in Buddhist Sunday schools and no doubt there are many times that number today. The proportion of male teachers is much greater than in American Sunday schools. Some of the denominations have secretaries of religious education, some of whom have specialized in religious education in the United States. Many Sunday schools have recreational activities linked up with them. In fact, Addison claims that they seem to be more concerned about amusing the children than anything else. But, he adds, we cannot criticize them for that for we even fail to amuse children in our Sunday schools.

Pratt in "The Pilgrimage of Buddhism" writes: "A Buddhist Sunday school is a very pretty sight and interesting. In the Shingon Sunday school on Mount Koya which we visited there were about one hundred and eighty children present, varying from four to fourteen in age: and with their brilliantly colored kimonos, their

black hair, their sparkling eyes, their sunny gladness, they made a sweet picture. They all sat together in the center of the hall, and (of course) on the floor, with no teachers or other grown-ups among them. The teachers stood around the walls and the children were left to listen and sing, to whisper and play, or to get up and go out as they liked. No effect at discipline was made, but none seemed greatly to be needed. The Japanese Sunday school depends for order upon the good manners of the children and the interest the speaker can inspire in them."

Many of the songs used in their schools are adaptations of our Sunday school hymns.

A Buddhist Salvation Army has been organized.

The Young Men's Buddhist's Associations are a going concern in Japan, but instead of being inter-denominational in character, each Buddhist sect has its own. One of the larger sects alone claimed a membership of 100,000 in its Young Men's Buddhism Association in 1928. They have branches in most college centers, and carry on a program of evangelism and social work similar to that of the Christian organizations. There is also a strong Young Women's Buddhist Association.

A surprising thing is that the Christian festival seasons have become widely known in Japan. Buddhists are advocating that they also celebrate events of the life of Buddha at the same times that Christians celebrate Christmas and Easter. Thus a Buddhist writing in the *Young East* says: "The commemoration of Our Lord Buddha's holy vigil beneath the Bo-tree during the December holiday period will enable us all, especially the young people, to participate in the social activities and delights about us, without abandoning our position as followers of the Lord Buddha. Let us welcome, then, this Bodhi season and celebrate it in our homes. Let us set up our symbolic tree and adorn it with lights and ornaments, not forgetting to place at its foot a statue, or at least a picture of Him whom in this festival we honor. Then let us gather around it with our little ones and tell again the wondrous story of Him who, in His boundless love for suffering mankind, renounced all that men hold most precious in order to find the true way of eternal salvation. In order that the full spiritual value of this celebration may be realized by them, let us carefully point out to the children the inner significance of the trees, the lights and the ornaments, as well as the Bodhi-gifts we present to them. So shall we lay an excellent foundation of religious truth in their young impressionable minds for the teaching they will receive in the Sunday school during the ensuing year." In 1897 there was begun the festival of Buddha's birthday, the Lumbini festival. It falls on April 8th. Braden in his recent book "Modern Tendencies in World Religions"

writes: "A writer in the Young East notes, among other features of the three day celebration in 1926, an evangelistic campaign in various sections of the capital, series of lectures on Buddhism by noted scholars, a radio broadcast of a life of Buddha for children, chorus singing of hymns of praise to Buddha, the dropping of lotus petals made of paper over the city from aeroplanes, the publication and distribution of special books and pamphlets commemorating the event. All the most modern up-to-date means available are being employed in the interest of their faith."

Buddhism in Japan is not lacking in agencies which promote social welfare. Recent statistics show that Buddhists in Japan maintain: 211 institutions for education and fostering children, such as orphanages, etc., 147 for helping working people to obtain a higher education, 139 institutions for giving advice and other assistance, such as exchanges; 47 hospitals and 20 schools for the blind and deaf. In 1919 they maintained 462 institutions for the care of ex-convicts (this is especially important to Buddhists). There are also social settlements, for example, one in Tokyo under the direction of a Buddhist priest who has studied social work in America. He has 7 full-time assistants and 28 part-time volunteer workers. The settlement has a domestic science school for girls, and an elementary school for boys and men, a free dispensary, a baby clinic with instruction for prenatal care, an employment agency, clubs for boys and girls, etc.—a sort of Hull House. There are also temperance societies and organizations to combat prostitution.

Buddhists are greatly concerned about the secularization of modern education. They have several hundred elementary schools of their own in addition to 10 colleges and 4 universities. Libraries and reading rooms are also maintained. In Japan about 200 books on Buddhism are published each year, as well as 219 monthly and 23 weekly Buddhist periodicals. There are 31 Buddhist publishing houses.

In the past Buddhism in Japan has been split into denominations much like Christianity in America. But here too there is an increasing tendency toward solidarity. Many institutions and schools are run on a union basis. Closely allied to this is a renewed sense of the world mission of Buddhism. The claim is repeatedly made that only Buddhism can save the modern world from its strife and bewilderment. The Buddhists too have been "rethinking" their program of missions. Here is what a writer in the *Young East* says about the approach which Buddhists ought to make to peoples of Western nations: "What should be the attitude of the Buddhist missionaries toward Christianity in Europe? Should they be hostile and exclusive, or should they appreciate and assimilate all that

is good and noble in Christ? In my opinion, the Buddhist missionaries should also study the Bible and the history of Christianity very thoroughly . . . A Buddhist must first adopt and adapt all the good points of Christianity, and then proceed to criticize the errors of the Christian Church. If he only denounces and ridicules Christianity without studying it, he will make exactly the same mistake as the purblind and ignorant Christian missionaries in China, Japan, and India committed for a hundred years. The Christian missionaries in India, China and Japan do not study and assimilate Hinduism, Confucianism and Buddhism: and they only denounce and criticise our great teachers and our sacred books. The result is that we do not listen to them at all, and we regard them as fools and fanatics. The Buddhists in Europe should not follow such a suicidal policy."

"A missionary is a guide and a leader for his congregation. He must decide many practical questions, and advise his disciples in their daily lives. It is a tremendous task. A Buddhist missionary who has not studied all the aspects of European civilization thoroughly, cannot help his disciples at all. Europe must solve labor problems, international problems, women's problems, ethical problems, religious problems, social problems, problems of all kinds in ever-increasing numbers. How will the Buddhist missionary deal with these educated and ambitious working men? How will he advise these clever, free, and idealistic women with short hair, and short skirts, and bare arms? If he applies the simple old rules of the venerable Tripitaka to these conditions, he will fail in his mission. The Buddhist missionary must himself become very modern and progressive in spirit and temperament. Then he will be able to guide and mould these active, inquisitive, daring, earnest and idealistic young men and women of Europe and America, in whose lily-white hands lies the future of the human race."

Of course these movements in Buddhism are taking place only in the progressive wing, and mostly in the large centers. Many rural sections are quite untouched as yet. Yet it seems that the future will bring an increase of such activity. Nowhere in the world does Buddhism seem so alive as in Japan.

FACING THE TASK OF PREACHING

ROBERT C. STANGER — Bethel Evangelical Church, Detroit

The work of the ministry in the modern day is exceedingly complex. The intricate machinery of the religious organization demands constant attention, and the demands made upon the leaders of the church are great and varied. Yet it will hardly be denied that the work of preaching is still one of the greatest jobs of the minister, and it cannot be dealt with too seriously. Every conscientious pastor is greatly concerned about the task of preaching. The day in which we are living is a great day for the preacher, because he is meeting greater competition than ever before. Everybody is preaching today; our editors in their newspaper columns, our novelists in their latest books, our educators in their programs, our government leaders and technicians in their pronouncements. Our radios deluge us with their variegated offerings. It behooves the modern preacher to look well to his work, and to be at his best. "Never take yourself too seriously," said a great sage, "but remember that you can never take your work seriously enough." Readers and students of the writings of Karl Barth will recall the awe with which he approaches the preaching function. "Who dares, who can preach, knowing what preaching is? What are you doing, you man, with the word of God upon your lips?" Something of that note of seriousness needs to grip us if our preaching is to be effective. A college woman, writing recently in the "Christian Century," complains of the triviality and the shallowness of some of the preaching to which she has listened, and quotes the words of Milton as aptly describing the situation in which many find themselves: "The hungry sheep look up and are not fed." Who has not been disturbed by the response or lack of response to our preaching today? How can we make our preaching more effective?

In facing the task of preaching today we had better begin with *self-analysis*. Let us ask ourselves, then, what are the besetting sins of the average preacher? It is necessary, in answering this question, to look at the work of preaching quite objectively. We cannot escape the impression that one of our besetting sins is a spirit of cock-sureness. It is perfectly amazing at times to hear or to read the pronouncements made by preachers on any number of subjects with an air of finality. Great and weighty problems are analysed, criticized and "solved." The peril of cock-sureness is caused or at least aggravated by the peculiar position of the man in the pulpit. There is never any "come-back" to his statement. He speaks from the sheltered position of the pulpit, and the decorum of public worship makes it highly improper to register any dissent

or any objection. And if such an objection should become vocal, as happened a year or so ago in the Cathedral of St. John, the Divine in New York under the preachment of Bishop Manning, the offender will be promptly removed from the scene by the staff of efficient ushers. Then again a certain respect for the clergy makes criticism after the service difficult, unless the preacher has touched upon too personal a theme. Some pastors are trying to remedy this situation by having forum periods or question periods in which the reaction of the listeners may find expression. One of the most wholesome exercises for any minister is to try to present the subject and substance of a pulpit discourse to an individual in private conversation, with the opportunity for rebuttal involved, and to see how entirely different the situation becomes. In criticising the "cock-sureness" we do not mean to minimise the element of conviction which ought to enter into our preaching. Preaching without conviction is like salt that has lost its savor; but real convictions are arrived at by a method of critical realism.

A second besetting sin of the preacher is the habit of *generalisation.* This also is an exceedingly pernicious habit, and is induced in part by a hasty attitude of mind, and a superficial preparation. It is the danger into which a person falls who has a great subject to discuss and has had little time to prepare it or little inclination to dig deeply into the matter. Much of it is due to the haste and hurry which is a part of modern life, and which the minister shares. How often have we heard discussions on war dismissed with the phrase: "the use of force is not in harmony with the spirit of Jesus." Sometimes it is, and sometimes it is not! The whole problem of violence is exceedingly intricate. Or again, we have a sermon on the economic issues of our time, and the whole sermon never gets beyond the phrase: "business should be guided not by the profit motive, but by the service motive." Just what do we mean by the service motive? Certainly we need to be more specific. What would the service motive imply in this industry or that, in this business or that? The economic problem will not be solved by generalisations. Our sermons have so long informed people that "we are all poor sinners" that this generalisation is taken for granted and, in fact, the average congregation is greatly comforted thereby. But woe to the preacher who becomes specific and points out the kind of sins embodied in the people in his congregation! If we need anything today it is preaching that is specific.

Let us add to our list of the besetting sins of the preacher that of *sentimentalism.* Religion very easily degenerates into lovely sentiment, far removed from the hard actualities of life. We face here one of the most insidious dangers in sermonising, all

the more dangerous because it is so hard to recognize. We deal here with an element of wishful thinking, and of flight from reality. It is tragic because it is so well-meant, and yet so ineffective. How often has the pulpit said: "If we only had the spirit of Jesus, then all of our problems would be solved." Certainly that is what we need, but just what does the "spirit of Jesus" mean in relation to the problem of unemployment or race prejudice? Or recall the sweet sentimentality of the phrase: "we need the spirit of love in all of our human relations." There is no word in the Christian vocabulary so abused and misunderstood as the word "love." The point of our discussion here is that we need a more realistic approach to the problems of life and of society, if our preaching is to be effective. Nothing is quite so refreshing as the note of robustness, the frank facing of the realities of life, the clear perception of the sinister hold of greed and selfishness on human life, which characterises much of the newer preaching. Only so can we lay hold on the vital reality of God and of spiritual forces.

Another sin "which doth so easily beset" the preacher is that of *provincialism*. A minister's reading tends to confine itself to the theological field or to the subject of religion, rather than to the broader field of human culture. His interests tend to confine themselves to the field of the church and of ecclesiastical organizations. Not only is his life distinctly narrowed thereby, but his influence is greatly limited. Often he does not know "how the other half lives," nor how the other half thinks. As a result he comes to the conclusion that the concerns of religion and theology are the primary and only concerns of mankind. He is greatly shocked when he finds that there are many really good and intelligent people who do not seem to be at all concerned about the things that concern him, and do not seem to become excited about matters that seem to him to be problems of real moment. There is something saddening about the cultured isolation of many preachers, so genuinely sincere and earnest, and yet so far removed from the place where people actually live. For many a preacher membership in a "book-of-the-month club" and subscription to a good secular journal have been both an eye-opener and a life-saver.

II.

In facing the task of preaching we can profit by a study of the work of the great preachers of our day. Homiletical magazines and current volumes of sermons reveal certain definite trends in modern preaching. The writer would heartily recommend Dr. Edgar DeWitt Jones' interesting book "American Preachers of Today" for illuminating insights into the work of the great church leaders of our time. Harper and Brothers have been publishing

for the past year or two a series of sermon books, issued at the rate of one a month at the price of one dollar, giving the best product of our outstanding preachers, and have offered samples of high quality. One is impressed among other things, with the fact that preaching today is topical rather than textual. In many cases the text serves as a pretext. The older type of sermon was essentially the exposition of a Bible passage. The modern sermon jumps into the midst of life and its problems, comes back to the Bible, and to the prophets, and to Jesus for resources as the thought proceeds. How can we account for the vogue of topical preaching today? It is due very largely to the practical nature of the American citizen who sits in the pews. He wants practical help and advice, and lacks the patience necessary for attention to an expository sermon. We must remember also the lack of a background of Biblical knowledge on the part of the average church member, which makes expository preaching exceedingly difficult. It is an unusual preacher who can make an expository sermon "interesting." It is being done and it can be done, and one would wish for more preachers who would explore the possibilities of expository preaching. It is only natural that in many quarters we note the disappearance of the text, which is perhaps the really honest thing to do, whenever the sermon is no longer an exposition of the thought of the text. Incidentally, many sermons do not seem to lose in power and effectiveness by the omission of a text, because they do embody a profound spiritual experience.

One is struck also by the *timeliness* of these sermons. Modern preaching has a contemporaneous quality which is refreshing. A certain church in Chicago claims that it presents religion "as new as the morning light and as fresh as today's newspapers." This may be carrying the matter to an extreme; yet we admire the fact that many modern preachers are dealing not with the Jebusites and Amorites who are safely buried, but with the living issues of our time, in the midst of which people live, and by which they are so often baffled and crushed.

The effective preachers of our day are realistic in their approach to life. They deal in their sermons, not with generalities, but with specific issues. They seem to come to grips with real life, and in doing so they come upon the resources of religion, as a living reality. Vital religion is always born out of a struggle and a tension. The living God is found as we face living issues. People find a strong appeal in a sermon that has the tang of reality about it.

One feels also that there are great and glaring defects in the contemporary preaching. Sometimes our very virtues betray us. Some sermons are so timely, that they neglect the *timeless* element.

They embody as a rule, well reasoned arguments, careful analysis and diagnosis of our present ills. They are "intellectually respectable." But often the note of *proclamation* is missing. The great prophets of religion and the great preachers of truth were little concerned about intellectual respectability or about harmonising their message with the latest findings of science. "My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power," said St. Paul; and the great days of preaching are those days of "fine, careless rapture" when the impulse of the message is: "This saith the Lord!" In the last analysis, men are not persuaded by religion, but they are compelled by it. As the crisis in religion and in the world at large deepens the note of proclamation will become stronger.

III.

Can we set up *some aims or ideals for our preaching,* as we face our task today? Here the matter must be stated in the form of a paradox. Our preaching must be *timely,* but also *timeless.* The danger of contemporaneousness is that its influence passes with the day. Really great personalities, for instance, have this quality of timelessness about them. Lincoln addressed himself to the pressing problem of the hour, and yet there was something about his work that rightly moved Stanton to say, as Lincoln lay dead: "Now he belongs to the ages." In a surpassing degree that was true of Jesus! we study the ministry of Jesus, and note how he dealt with the problems of his time and sought to help people in their immediate situation, and yet he healt with the problems of all time. Jesus lives, and his gospel continues because it is not only timely, but also partakes of the timeless and the eternal. The preacher finds his inspiration here. Somehow the sermon, if it is to be effective, must be timely, so as to help people living under the pressure of an immediate situation; and yet it must bring these problems into relationship with the eternal verities.

Our preaching must be *realistic, and yet idealistic.* The danger which the realist faces is that he may become a hopeless pessimist. He faces life with absolute candor, and sees its meanness, its brutality and ruthlessness, and often he does not get beyond this. Dr. Lynn Harold Hough, in commenting on the mood of realism among the younger religious leaders, say: "Realism does not consist in simply telling unpleasant truths. After the antiseptic honesty which comes from facing the goods. -The realists are already on the way to a great belief.—The very mood of terrific honesty which characterizes the best young men among us has in it a promise of a new discovery of God." ("Contemporary Religious Thinking" p. 101 and 103.) The Old Testament prophets were

realists, and yet it was their very genius because of their utter realism to see an ultimate hope. Doom is never the last word in religion, neither is it despair, but it is hope. Our preaching must be realistic. It must face the facts. But it must face all the facts! And the ultimate fact is God, and the moral spiritual order in which we "live and move and have our being."

Finally, our preaching must be *positive and yet tolerant.* The only effective preaching is that which is based on conviction. And yet how often our convictions make us bigoted, and breed intolerance of the convictions of others. Great preaching somehow combines a reat positive declaration, fearless and unashamed, with an open-mindedness and a largeness of heart that recognizes the values in other points of view. We are not greatly concerned as to whether the preacher is a conservative or a modernist in his opinions, but as to whether he has positive convictions. Our people do not care greatly about the things we do *not* believe; they do care supremely about the things we *do* believe. Perhaps one reason for the sickness of liberalism in many quarters today is to be sought in the fact that its emphasis was often negative rather than positive, and that it sometimes substituted smartness for conviction. But we are living in a day of crisis, and there is no help for us except in positive convictions tolerantly held.

These are great days for preaching, and difficult days. Lord, who is equal to the task?

CHILDREN'S SERMONS

By M. Manrodt, Th. M.

1. The Lord Calls Children

"Jehovah came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel said, Speak; for thy servant heareth." 1 Samuel 3: 10.

Today I shall tell you a story about a little boy who was only about three years old when his mother brought him to church. They did not call it "church" in those days, but "temple," as the Jews do to this day. This boy—his name was Samuel—did not only come to attend Sunday school, however, he stayed there all of the time. He lived in a room right in the temple with the priest, whose name was Eli, and he helped the priest in opening the doors of the temple, and cleaning the temple, and taking care of the lamps and the candle-sticks, and many other things, which the old priest Eli had to attend to.

One night, several years after he had first come there, Samuel heard a voice calling "Samuel." Samuel jumped up in his bed and wondered who had called him. It must have been Eli, the priest! So he went to Eli and said: "Here I am; for you called me." But the priest said: "No, I didn't call you; go back to bed." After a while Samuel heard the same voice again, calling "Samuel." Again he went to Eli and again he was told to go back to bed. But when all of this happened the third time, Eli began to think and he said to Samuel: "Samuel, the Lord is calling you, and when you hear the voice again, say: Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." And that is how it happened: Samuel did hear that voice a fourth time and he answered: "Speak, Lord, thy servant heareth." Then God told him all the things that were going to happen to Eli and his family and to the whole country, because Eli was weak and his sons were bad, and the whole country was negligent. God told all these things to the boy because He wanted him to be priest in Eli's place and wanted him to be a better man and make the people obey God and find happiness. And Samuel not only listened to the words of God, but he took them to heart and the things God wanted him to do and he grew up to be a great man. The people called him a prophet of the Lord, but he really was king and judge and general and priest for the whole nation of Israel.

Times have changed since Samuel, but God still calls men and women, and He is calling boys and girls. To be sure, He calls them in different ways, but He has work for all of them. Some of you are still very young, so very little, that you know practically nothing about this great old world of ours and you may ask won-

dering: "But what can we do?" God has a task for you just because you are young, because you still are new in the world, because you are young, because you still are new in the world, because you still wonder about so many things which you can not understand. They look different to you today than they do to the older people. Just because of that God needs you.

Let me explain to you how that is possible. Many years back I came to a church that had a pair of large green doors leading into the church proper. I don't know why they were painted that way. It would have been nice for a garden, but they looked terribly out of place for a church. I knew those doors had to be changed if we wanted our church to look like a church. But there was no painter in the church to paint them differently, and we had no money to hire a painter, and I did not have the courage to paint church doors, and so the doors stayed green! After a while I didn't even notice it any more that these doors were green; they looked as nice to me as any other church doors. I had become so used to them that I didn't even care any more to have them changed. Then another man came to that church and as he saw those doors he said: "That looks terrible for a church." Then I remembered that once upon a time I had said so myself and we painted them right quickly before the other man would get used to them and not see the green paint any more either.

Now let us look further. There are many things in the world that are terrible, but I don't see them any more; I am used to them. And other men and women don't see them any more. We all think that's the way the world is and that's how it has to be. But you don't think so. When something goes wrong, you still wonder why it should be that way. You are offended when somebody hurts you. You take notice and rebel and want things changed. There may be other green doors somewhere else. There may be ways about our church that are not so good. Look around, take notice, think it over, and then help us make this a better church. There may be things about our Sunday school that could be improved. Make up your minds today that, when you grow up, you are going to give the children better Sunday school teachers and find better ways and methods. You may meet parents who are gruff and unpleasant; take it to heart while you notice it and when you grow up you act and talk differently. There may be ways in business which are not right; people don't even see it any more. They are like the old priest Eli. His eyes were weak and he did not see the half of it, and of the other half he thought it could not be changed. His own boys were bad and they had by this time grown up to be men. We grown-ups are quite often just like Eli:

We take everything for granted. We believe everything is just nice and right as it is and the best we can do is to leave good enough alone and not create a disturbance. That's why we need Samuels, who are still young, whose eyes are keen, who listen to the Lord, and who make up their minds to do differently when they grow up.

The next morning after God had talked to Samuel, Eli wanted to know what the Lord had said. Of course, Samuel didn't like to tell him, but when Eli insisted he frankly told him every word. Then Eli said: "It is the Lord: He will do what seems good to him." Not all people are like Eli in this respect. More people will tell you that you are too young to know anything. There is some truth in that because you do not know everything and make mistakes at times in your judgments and also in your ideals. You must be very careful and slow to condemn other people, but you must never be slow to stand up for that which is right! You must never be slow to make up your mind to do the work God shows you today and which he is calling you for. If God calls you into His service, answer boldly like Samuel: "Speak, Lord, thy servant heareth," and know that God is going to stand by you and help you through.

In the year 1700 a boy was born in Germany whose name was Nicholas, Count of Zinzendorf. His father was a wealthy nobleman and prime-minister at the court of the king of Saxony. At that time a wave of irreligion spread over the whole continent of Europe and the boy Zinzendorf felt that the world lacked the strengthening faith in Jesus Christ. While still in school he therefore formed a prayer circle among his friends and made plans to spend his entire life in God's special service. His father died while he was still young and his guardian did not believe in Nicholas' ideas and thought the boy would get over his religious notions. So he sent him to a different school, but the boy never did change. When only a little more than twenty years old, he founded a colony for persecuted Protestants on one of his estates. He converted them to his views and they sent missionaries to all the poor and neglected of the earth they heard about. They sent them to Greenland, to Labrador, to West India, to North America. Zinzendorf himself came to America and preached to the Indians. Here was a boy with an ideal and he lived up to it all his life and with all his possessions. To be sure, he made mistakes, Zinzendorf had many a foolish notion which he came to realize in the course of time, but he never wavered in his faith and never swerved from the ideals which he formed while he was a boy.

God is still calling. He is calling you today. He is calling you in the church, through your Sunday school teacher, through

your fathers and mothers, He is calling you through the experiences in the world. And when God calls, don't lie down and sleep and forget all about it, but sit up and say: "Speak, Lord, thy servant heareth." Be a real Samuel and a servant of God!

2. A Lesson from the Crab

"Finally, be ye all likeminded, compassionate, loving as brethren, tenderhearted, humbleminded: not rendering evil for evil, or reviling for reviling; but contrariwise blessing; for hereunto were ye called, that ye should inherit a blessing." 1 Peter 3: 8-9.

Some time ago I told you about the wonders of God's creation. Whether we lift our eyes to the sky above or study one of God's tiniest creatures here below, we find that He has prepared all things wonderfully. This holds true not only about their bodies and forms, but also about their ways and character.

Today I would have you learn a lesson from the crab. How many of you like crabs? How many of you have ever gone crabbing? But I wonder if any of you have ever tried to see life from the side of the crab?

The life of the humble crustacean is not an easy one. If you need a new coat your father and mother will go to the store and buy one. Or mother will take your measurements and she will make you a new one out of some nice piece of goods. And when it's all done you can take off the old coat and put on the new. But if a crab needs a new coat, and he does so whenever he has grown a little and the old one has become too tight, he has to shed the old and then sit in a corner all by himself until the new one has grown on his body.

It's just as bad for him when he is hungry. He likes good things to eat, but he has to take the bad too. You wouldn't want that salted eel you put on your crab-line, or that piece of left-over pork. But he has to take it as it comes.

Now the remarkable thing about the crab is this: In spite of all the hardships and disappointments in his life, the crab does not get bitter or sour, but he is all lovely food, he transforms all he gets into sweet, delicious crab-meat!

That has brought to my mind a word from the apostle Peter (the text). And now I want to ask you a few simple questions:

1. If life is hard on you, what do you do? The crab simply withdraws and makes a bigger coat for himself. But people grumble! They even accuse God! They say that, if there were a God, He would not let life become so hard, He would always make it easy for them. Saint Peter wrote the words of our text to Christians who had to suffer because of their Christian faith. Some of them lost their homes, others were put in prison, their very lives were in

danger. They had reason to grow bitter, and Peter challenges them to be loving and tenderhearted and humbleminded. That's God's way and I wonder if we can't learn it also.

2. If some one does you wrong, what do you do? You try to go him one better! I read a story of a man who had been thrown into prison for no wrong he had done and when he came out he had only one ambition: To take the sheriff's life who accused him falsely. That's human, but God teaches us differently. What did Jesus do when His enemies hated and troubled Him and finally had Him nailed to the cross? He prayed: "Father, forgive them." Therefore, we see in Him fulfilled that wonderful chapter 53 of the prophet Isaiah about the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world. When some one does us wrong, we want to add more to it, but the Christian way is to overcome it.

3. If some one speaks evil of you (for that is what reviling means), what do you do? You try to call him worse names and tell worse stories about him. In the first book of Samuel, the tenth chapter, we read the story about the choosing of the first king of Israel, Saul. Samuel the prophet announced him to the people as God's choice and asked them to follow him. But some of the people sneered at him and despised him. And what did Saul do? "He held his peace." Later on, when Saul won a mighty victory over the enemies of his people, the Ammonites, his friends urged him now to take revenge against the men who had despised him, but Saul would not do it and rather thanked God that He had established his kingdom.

Now, when you think these things over, don't you think that the humble crab is a pretty good Christian? Consider also the flowers of the field, even the humble dandelions, the thistles, the violets? What do they get? Black or brown soil, "dirt" we call it. And they gladden the heart with their cheerful colors and some of them give sweet perfume.

But you will object: God made them all that way. God gave the crab shears to cut hard and tough things, and a stomach to digest them. And the flowers have roots that know how to extract good things from the soil, and they have leaves that can use the sunshine to work wonderful transformations.

That's true. But we also have power. Peter says: "Hereunto were ye called." God has given us the power of His Holy Spirit. He has given us strength of faith, Jesus has promised us even the right words to say in difficult moments.

The story is told of a man who was loving and forgiving as Peter asks us to be. When his friends talked to him about it one day he pointed to the Lord's comand to love even our enemies and then told them about a dream he had had once upon a time.

In his dream he saw an angel in heaven over a great, big book. And every time somebody did something evil to somebody else, the angel wrote it all down against that man and it filled a whole page. But whenever somebody overcame the evil then the angel shouted for joy: "Well done." Ever after that, said the man, I felt sorry for the people who do wrong and am happy every time I can overcome evil.

It is easy enough to go to Sunday school and come to church, but if you want to be real Christians you should be loving and forgiving and bring sweetness and sunshine into the world, even if the world treats you differently.

3. Fences

"Great peace have they that love thy law; And they have no occasion of stumbling." Psalm 119: 165.

Once in a while on nice Sunday afternoons I drive over to Druid Hill Park and walk around or play with the children. I wonder how many of you go there also? Can you go in at any time? Yes, it's there for the people. I have seen a number of signs there which start "This is your park. . ." Do they let you walk across the lawns too? Yes, it doesn't seem to hurt the grass and you can play any place you want to.

But near the western end of it I have found an old cemetery. Do you think it would be nice to walk over the graves? That's why they have put a fence around it.

There are a number of places where the gardeners have planted all kinds of beautiful flowers. You would destroy them if you stepped on them. So the gardeners have placed rocks all around and sometimes low fences to remind you and keep you off.

You also know the big lake where the city has gathered water for us to drink. Would it be safe for children to play on the rocks along the water's edge? What therefore did they do? They built a high iron fence around it.

But one of the most interesting spots of the whole park is the zoo. Do you like to see the animals? Would you like to play with the monkeys and the bears, the lions and the tigers? So that the children may not forget they have put a railing around, and for the animals to keep at a safe distance they have put them in cages. And what is a cage but a strong fence all around?

Why then do you think that people put up fences? (Let the children answer).

Suppose now that a child insisted on having his own way and climbed over the fence? He would get hurt. You probably read the story in the paper the other day where a litle girl crawled into the bear's den and the bear began to maul her arm until one of

the keepers came to her rescue. Some fences also have barbed wire along the top and any boy who'll venture over will tear his clothes.

But suppose that you saw some boys climb over and they told you that it was all right and they pulled you after them? You would get hurt just the same. But the blame would be on you both.

Druid Hill Park is a wonderful place and we go to enjoy ourselves there, but some boys and girls get themselves into trouble, whenever they are left to go by themselves.

Now I want you to lift up your eyes and see a much greater and even more beautiful park. Look as far as you can see: the wide country and the green woods, the shining rivers, the big cities in between. See it reach way into the sky: During the day the big bright light and at night the millions of little lamps. Isn't it a wonderful place? The people are the flowers in this park. Are they beautiful like the flowers in our gardens? I think so. At least God has made them in a wonderful way. Some of them are spoiled and some of them are soiled. But the gardener Jesus can make them right again.

But what about the fences? Are there any fences in this vast park of God's creation? And what are they? There are fences of all sorts: some are little, some are mere signs, but mainly there are ten fences and we call them? The Ten Commandments! And what will happen if you climb over the fences? You will get hurt!

Take the first commandment. "I am the Lord thy God. . . Thou shalt have no other gods before me." If you do you will get yourself into trouble. The heathen do and they live in fear of their gods. The Athenians of Paul's day were philosophers who tried to find God according to their own minds. But they were not at ease. They built an altar "To the unknown God" for fear lest they had overlooked some deity. In our day some people think more of their money than anything else and you can see their worries deeply engraven in their faces.

Remember the third Commandment. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord Thy God in vain." If you do the name of God becomes meaningless to you; it becomes hard for you to pray. Men become foul-mouthed and their friends have to be ashamed to be seen with them.

It is the same all through the commandments. There is danger or filth on the other side. You tear and soil the beautiful lives God has given you. An old Evangelical pastor tells in his reminscences of a young woman he had met in the early part of his ministry. She wanted to be free, to enjoy life, go wherever she pleased without restraint. So she went with bad company and took sick. She repented and God helped her to a new and clean start, but

she went back again to her evil life and he finally found her again in a hospital with a poisoned body, covered with sores, and dying.

But the worst is when people climb over the fences and take others after them. Occasionally I call on a young man, who is weak in body and weak in mind, spending his days in a state institution. His father was a heavy drinker, he disregarded God's laws. Is God to blame for all this misery? He put up the fences and He warned them too.

Now let us go back to the park once more. How many of you like to go to Druid Hill Park? And who sees more of it and enjoys it the better? The boys and the girls who play on the grass and stop at the fences, or those who stop at the first place, climb over the fences and tear their clothes? The first will go home with happy memories and happy stories; they will bring others and make them happy also.

I wonder, whether you know the ten fences God has put up in His beautiful creation? (Let them recite the Ten Commandments). Let us thank God for the fences and pray for strength to live according to His holy will and thus find joy and beauty in this life.

4. The Worth of the Human Soul

"What doth it profit a man, to gain the whole world, and forfeit his life? For what should a man give in exchange for his life?" Mark 8: 36-37.

I wonder how many of you have a little brother or sister at home? If I gave you a thousand dollars, would you sell your baby sister or brother to me? If I made it ten thousand dollars? A number of years ago, when our children were small, a lady offered me a million dollars for a little boy. I think she was joking, but she did have a lot of money and she would have liked to have a little baby boy. But I would never have been happy again all the days of my life, if I had sold my own little boy.

Life is more precious than all the possessions of the world. Jesus said: Your life is worth more than all the world. These words of our text are among the most precious things Jesus has said about our lives. No matter what sort of a body a person has, whether he is still a child or a grown-up, whether he is rich or poor, it doesn't even make any difference whether he is healthy or crippled. All the world is not worth as much as the life of one person! That's why Jesus said: "Whosoever shall cause one of these little ones that believe on me to stumble, it is profitable for him that a great millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be sunk in the depth of the sea."

Now, most people agree to this and would never take a life, but they will destroy the soul little by little! Most people would never think of selling the life or the soul of a little child, but they will sell a little of its innocence or purity for as little as five cents. I have heard fathers and mothers lie about the age of a little child so that they could save one trolley car fare. They saved five cents, but the child wasn't as pure and as innocent any more after he had heard father or mother lie about him.

Most people would never think of selling their own lives or souls, but they will sell a little of its purity or innocence. They do or say many things that they must be ashamed about, boys and girls do and say things that they must hide from their fathers and mothers. But life is too great, too valuable to be spoiled by foolish talk or jesting!

I always tell the Confirmation Class to ask themselves at the end of a Sunday: What has been the profit of the day? We all should ask ourselves at the end of every week: What has been the profit of the week? What have I learned? What have I earned? And what have I given up? Have I given a piece of my soul? Have I become a little poorer at heart? Many men are successful in business but they lose their hearts in return. Was your profit worth the expense?

You would probably never deny the Lord like Peter did, but you may do it in a small way! When you don't go to Sunday school or church on a Sunday, when you have no prayers at home, when you act as though you never had heard about God, then your neighbors and friends see it written all over you: That boy or girl does not know or does not want to know the Lord Jesus.

The lesson I want you to remember is this: There are certain things which you do not want to sacrifice, but you think nothing of it to give up one little bit after another. We do not want to give away our lives or their holiness, or our fellowship with the Lord, but we neglect them little by little. It is like trying to save the dollars and throwing away all the pennies. Eventually the pennies will make dollars.

I have known many, many people, who were sour and disgusted with life, who did nothing for God and less for their neighbor. They had never wanted to be that way! Yet they gave up little by little of that beautiful Christian spirit which God has given us to foster and to enjoy.

I have known people who think nothing of taking some trifle that doesn't belong to them in the places where they work or live. Others, who tell the truth today and tomorrow have a slightly different story. They are not really thieves or liars, and yet they are

never really honest; in fact, they have broken up that sterling Christian character which God had blessed them with.

When I was a child I read a story in our reader about a little mouse that was very, very hungry. So she went into the kitchen of the house, where she lived and looked around. Sure enough, there was a nice, little piece of meat. But the little mouse knew that the meat had been laid out for her and poisoned. But she was very hungry and said: "One little bite isn't anything." So she took one little bite and didn't feel anything either. But now she felt hungrier than before. So she took just another little bite. And then another until she fell over dead. She would never have eaten the poisoned meat, but she thought nothing of taking a little bite, and then another little bite.

Many boys and girls really want to be good Christians, but they think nothing of doing one bad deed and saying an evil word, and gradually their tender lives grow harder and harder. They poison their lives little by little. And what do they do it for? A little money, a little satisfaction, a little pleasure, and all the world is not worth the lives they lay down for it!

We would be Christians, and we are glad that Jesus told us that our lives are worth so much in the eyes of the heavenly Father! We'll try to take care of them and grow in purity and holiness and strength of faith. We'll pray God to keep us from foolishly wasting our lives and to lead us in ways of Christian service, doing the things that are pleasant in His sight. Our example and leader, yea our God and Lord is Jesus, and of Him the Bible tells us that He "advanced in wisdom and stature and favor with God and with men" when He was a boy here on earth.

Zur kirchlichen Krisis in Deutschland.

Von D. Dr. Otto Dibelius.

Die Vorgänge in der evangelischen Kirche Deutschlands werden in der ganzen Welt mit Aufmerksamkeit verfolgt. Es ist dabei gewiß viel politisches Sensationsbedürfnis im Spiel. Ueber die eigentlichen politischen Vorgänge ist so wenig zu berichten. Die vollziehen sich nicht mehr wie früher in der Oeffentlichkeit der Presse. Die kirchlichen Auseinandersetzungen stehen nicht unter derselben strengen Zensur. Wenigstens in den kirchlichen Blättern darf darüber mit beschränkter Offenheit geschrieben werden. So greift man danach. Und da der größte Teil der ausländischen Presse dem neuen Deutschland unfreundlich gegenüber steht, so versucht man, aus den kirchlichen Vorgängen Material gegen das herrschende Regime zu gewinnen.

Aber hin und her, namentlich in der kirchlichen Presse des Auslandes, begegnet man doch einem tieferen Verständnis. Man fängt an zu begreifen, daß es sich in diesen kirchlichen Kämpfen um eine Entscheidung handelt, die für alle christlichen Länder und für alle Kirchen der Welt von ungeheurer Bedeutung sein wird. Man fängt an zu begreifen, daß der Kampf darum geht, ob das Christentum in Deutschland Geltung behalten soll oder nicht, ob insbesondre das reformatorische Verständnis des Evangeliums im Land Martin Luthers weiterhin verkündigt werden wird. Deutschland — das hängt mit seiner geographischen Lage, aber es hängt auch mit der grundsätzlichen Einstellung der deutschen Geistesart zusammen — kämpft die großen geistigen Entscheidungen in der Regel durch für die ganze Welt. Das geschieht jetzt wieder. **Es handelt sich heute darum, ob der christliche Glaube, getragen von dem Bewußtsein der Absolutheit und Ausschließlichkeit der Offenbarung Gottes in Jesus Christus, seine Weltmission behalten, oder ob die einzelnen Völker und Rassen „Die große Heimkehr" vollziehen sollen zu einer Nationalreligion, jedes nach seiner Art.**

Diese Dinge sind geistesgeschichtlich und kirchengeschichtlich von einer solchen Bedeutung, daß der Verfasser dieser Zeilen sich der Bitte nicht hat versagen wollen, den amerikanischen Freunden ein Wort darüber zu sagen, so schwierig es aus begreiflichen Gründen ist, jetzt schon zu diesen Fragen in der Oeffentlichkeit das Wort zu nehmen.

1.

Dreimal hat sich seit den Tagen der Reformation der autonome Mensch gegen das Christentum erhoben und hat eine neue Religion proklamiert.

Das erste Mal im Zeitalter der **Aufklärung.** Damals erklärte sich die Vernunft für das Forum, vor dem alles sich rechtfertigen sollte, was es zwischen Himmel und Erde gibt. Die Vernunft kritisierte und erschütterte die Grundlagen des christlichen Glaubens. Sie begann die Kritik der Bibel. Sie erklärte alles, was über die Welt der fünf Sinne hinausging, für müßige Phantasie. Sie riß die Menschen mit sich fort in dem Glauben, daß nun eine neue, bessere Welt angebrochen sei. Daß während der französischen Revolution die „Göttin der Vernunft" unter dem Jubel der Masse sinnbildlich auf den Thron gesetzt wurde, bezeichnete die Stimmung der Zeit. Großes hat die Aufklärung geleistet. Vielleicht nirgends Größeres als in Deutschland. Was wir den deutschen Idealismus nennen, die philosophischen Schöpfungen Kants, Fichtes, Hegels, die Dichtungen Goethes, Schillers, Herders, das steht alles auf den Schultern der Aufklärung.

Noch heute spüren wir die Wirkungen jener Zeit. Die deutsche Revolution von 1918 war von den Idealen jener Zeit erfüllt. Jetzt erst schien der volle Sieg der französischen Revolution auf deutschem Boden zum Durchbruch zu kommen. Von den ländlichen Schulhäusern entfernte man jetzt die frommen Sprüche. Wo bis dahin gestanden hatte: „Lasset die Kindlein zu mir kommen!" da las man jetzt: „Wissen ist Macht!" Noch heute herrscht in religiösen Fragen weithin die Einstellung der Aufklärung. Wie stark sie in andern Ländern noch wirkt, auch in Amerika, das braucht hier nicht ausgeführt zu werden.

Der zweite Vorstoß geschah im Zeitalter der **Technik.** Jetzt erhob sich der materielle Mensch. Er erklärte alles für unwirklich und überflüssig, was man nicht anfassen könne. Das Leben sei ein Kampf um Futterplatz und Futtermenge. Einen andern Sinn habe es nicht. Technischer Fortschritt und Lösung der durch das kapitalistische System entstandenen sozialen Frage, das allein sei die Aufgabe der Zeit. Alles Geistige sei nur ein Produkt des Materiellen. „Der Mensch ist, was er ißt!" Religion sei nichts weiter als ein „ideologischer Ueberbau der kapitalistischen Wirtschaftsordnung." Der entschlossene Sozialismus fügte hinzu: sie sei Opium fürs Volk, weil sie die Massen hindere, sich ihre Freiheit zu erkämpfen.

An die Stelle der Religion sollte nun der Sozialismus treten. Er sollte dem Menschen alles geben, was er bis dahin bei der Kirche gefunden hatte: Feierstunden und geheiligte Symbole, die ihn über den grauen Alltag emporheben; eine Gemeinschaft, die den Einzelnen trägt; ein großes Ziel, für das es sich lohnt, zu leben und zu sterben.

Wieder gingen die Massen begeistert mit. Es schien, als ob in Deutschland wirklich so etwas wie eine sozialistische Ersatzkirche

zustande kommen würde. Sowjet-Rußland schien die messianische Idee des Sozialismus zu verwirklichen. „Mit uns geht die neue Zeit!" — so sang die sozialistische Arbeiterjugend in Deutschland.

Der Traum ist zerronnen. Aber der Materialismus als geistige Macht wirkt noch heute mit Gewalt. Man spürt ihn in der neuen „Sachlichkeit," die vielfach die seelischen Werte des Menschenlebens leugnet; man spürt ihn in der Einstellung der Massen zum Leben, in dem allgemeinen Rückgang der Geburten und in vielen andern Dingen mehr.

Und jetzt erhebt sich der autonome Mensch zum dritten Mal. Er erhebt sich als **völkischer Idealismus.** Es geht wie eine Welle durch ganz Europa. In Italien hat es begonnen. Dann kam die Umwälzung in Deutschland. Und jeder weiß, wie die Ueberzeugung, daß die parlamentarische Staatsform sich überlebt habe, daß von internationalen Verständigungen nichts mehr zu erwarten sei, daß nichts anders übrig bleibe als eine diktatorische Regierungsweise, die alle Kräfte der Nation zusammenfaßt und sie in den Dienst der nationalen Selbstbehauptung stellt — wie diese Ueberzeugung im Vordringen ist. In Polen, in Oesterreich hat sie gesiegt. In der Schweiz, in Schweden, selbst in England ist sie im Vormarsch. Niemand kann sich mehr der Erkenntnis entziehen, daß ein neuer Abschnitt in der Geschichte der Menschheit angebrochen ist

Dieser völkische Idealismus erhebt sich nun gegen das Christentum. Jedenfalls in Deutschland. In den andern Ländern, in denen er sich bisher siegreich durchgesetzt hat, ist die Stellung der katholischen Kirche so stark, daß man sich hier den Verhältnissen hat anpassen müssen. Daß aber die Tendenz auch in diesen Ländern die gleiche ist wie in Deutschland, ist vor aller Augen. Wir entsinnen uns der schweren Zusammenstöße, die Mussolini mit dem Vatikan gehabt hat. Und wer sich einige Zeit in Italien aufhält, beobachtet mit aller Klarheit, daß das Verhältnis zwischen dem Faschismus und zwischen der katholischen Kirche zwar korrekt, aber doch überaus kühl ist. Es sind eben zwei verschiedene Welten, die hier zusammenstoßen. In Polen ist es genau so.

In Deutschland ist nur ein Drittel der Bevölkerung katholisch getauft. Die evangelische Kirche aber steht zum Staat grundsätzlich anders als die katholische. Infolgedessen fehlen hier die Bindungen und Hemmungen, die dort zur Rücksicht zwangen. Der geistige Kampf konnte hier mit der ganzen Klarheit vorgetragen werden, die dem Wesen des Deutschen entspricht.

Die Forderung des völkischen Idealismus ist die, daß jede Rasse zu ihrer eigenen Religionsform zurückkehren müsse. Das Konstitutive im Wesen des Menschen sei das Blut. Echtes, gesundes Leben sei nur da, wo das Blut sich seine artgemäße Kultur schaffe, einschließlich einer artgemäßen Religion. Blut, Rasse, na-

tionales Ehrgefühl und nationale Freiheit — das seien die obersten Werte im Leben des Menschen. Sie müßten als das Absolute und schlechthin Maßgebende alles bestimmen, was in der Seele des Menschen sein Leben hat.

Das Christentum ist artfremd. Denn es kommt aus der semitischen Völkerwelt. Selbst wenn Christus nicht Jude gewesen sei, sondern, wie die „Deutschgläubigen" sagen, ein Arier, geboren in dem „Galiläa der Heiden," wo nach dem Exil das Judentum nicht mehr Fuß gefaßt habe, so sei doch das Christentum unter dem Einfluß des Paulus derartig in semitische Geistesart geraten, daß es eine semitische Religion geworden sei. Die semitische Art aber sei das Verhängnis der nordischen Völker. Namentlich für das deutsche Volk sei sie die Ursache der Entartung. Eine deutsche Zukunft könne es nur geben, wenn das semitische Element aus dem deutschen Blut und aus dem deutschen Geistesleben radikal ausgeschieden werde. Darum müsse auch das Christentum verschwinden!

Das sind die drei großen Vorstöße der letzten zweihundert Jahre gegen die Geltung des Christentums. Jeder dieser Vorstöße hat sich an einer Stelle mit einer politischen Macht verbunden. Die Aufklärung mit der französischen Revolution. Der Materialismus mit dem Sowjetsystem. Der völkische Idealismus mit dem Nationalismus in Deutschland. Und diese Verbindung mit einer politischen Macht hat die Wirkung des Vorstoßes so groß gemacht. Zwar ist jedesmal die Zeit gekommen, in der der Vorstoß als abgeschlagen gelten konnte. Aber jedesmal ist für die Geltung des christlichen Glaubens die Basis im Leben der Völker schmaler geworden. Vielleicht nicht zum Schaden für die Echtheit und den Ernst des Glaubens. Aber das Wort von der „kleinen Herde" hat mit jedem Mal größere Bedeutung gewonnen. Und das ist nicht zuletzt dem Umstand zuzuschreiben, daß durch die Verbindung mit der politischen Gewalt an einer Stelle die Auswirkung der neuen Ideen verstärkt und verlängert wurde. Es wird diesmal nicht anders sein.

2.

Wer von dem Wesen dieses völkischen Idealismus und von seiner Stellung zum Christentum eine Vorstellung haben will, wird zu dem Buch von **Alfred Rosenberg** greifen müssen: **„Der Mythus des 20. Jahrhunderts."**

Rosenberg selbst und viele einflußreiche Persönlichkeiten der nationalsozialistischen Bewegung legen Wert darauf, daß dies Buch nicht eine offizielle Schrift der Partei sei, sondern eine persönliche Arbeit des Verfassers, sodaß also die Partei mit seinen Anschauungen nicht identifiziert werden dürfe. Aber das ist in unserm Zusammenhang nicht wesentlich. Es handelt sich für uns um die

Bewegung des völkischen Idealismus in ihrer Gesamtheit. Der deutsche Nationalsozialismus ist zwar auf deutschem Boden die stärkste, wuchtigste und seit der Uebernahme der staatlichen Macht auch einflußreichste Erscheinungsform dieser großen geistigen Bewegung. Aber die Bewegung erschöpft sich nicht in ihm.

Für die Bewegung aber ist Rosenbergs Buch ohne Zweifel eine klare und charakteristische Manifestation. Und da Rosenberg die Leitung aller großen, weltanschaulichen Arbeiten der Partei übertragen erhalten hat, so dringen seine Anschauungen auf tausend Kanälen auch in ihren Einzelheiten in das deutsche Volk von heute ein. Das Buch selbst hat eine Auflage von weit über 100,000 Exemplaren. Und auch im kirchlichen Kampf hat es sich oft genug um Behauptungen und Formulierungen gehandelt, die dem Buch von Rosenberg entnommen waren, ohne daß das gesagt wurde — ein Beweis dafür, wie stark der Einfluß des Buches heute in Deutschland ist.

Wir skizzieren kurz den Inhalt des Buches, soweit er für die kirchliche Auseinandersetzung von unmittelbarer Bedeutung ist.

Die Geschichte der Zukunft, so heißt es in der Einleitung, wird nicht mehr Kämpfe zwischen Klassen oder Religionen bringen, sondern Auseinandersetzungen zwischen Blut und Blut, zwischen Rasse und Rasse. Das aber bedeutet ein Ringen von Seelenwerten gegeneinander. Bisher waren die Werte der Rassenseele noch nicht lebendiges Bewußtsein geworden. Jetzt muß und wird das geschehen. Es „ist die Aufgabe unsers Jahrhunderts, aus einem neuen Lebensmythus einen neuen Menschentypus zu schaffen." Für die nordische Rasse muß eine neue Rangordnung der Werte herausgearbeitet werden. Und zwar diejenige Rangordnung, die dem Wesen dieser Rasse entspricht. Jede Rasse züchtet letzten Endes nur **ein** höchstes Ideal. Dieser eine Höchstwert bedingt eine ganz bestimmte Gruppierung der andern Lebensgebote. Er bestimmt den Daseinsstil der Rasse.

Nun ist es die Tragik der nordischen Rasse gewesen, zu der die Deutschen gehören, daß ihr rassenmäßiges Ideal durch das Christentum erstickt worden ist. Gerade in dem Augenblick, als Wotan zum Sterben ging, als also die alte germanische Religion ihre Kraft verloren hatte, da kam das Christentum. Die germanischen Völker hatten keine Gelegenheit mehr, sich eine neue Religion zu schaffen. Rom schlug sie alle in seinen Bann. Es zwang ihnen einen Glauben auf, in dem der jüdische Geist lebendig war. Luther hat einen großen Schritt vorwärts getan, der Wiedererlangung der Freiheit entgegen. Er hat der Priesterherrschaft ein Ende gemacht. Aber er ist auf halbem Weg stehen geblieben. Weder vom Alten Testament, noch von Paulus, diesem „materialistischen Rabbiner" (S. 13) hat er das deutsche Volk befreit.

Nun ist freilich die deutsche Art, Gott zu suchen und zu finden, trotz der Herrschaft des Christentums nie ganz erloschen. Sie ist z. B. in der Mystik des Meisters Eckehart durchgebrochen, der Gott in seinem Innern suchte. Auch in Friedrich dem Großen und in Paul de Lagarde, dem Göttinger Professor am Ausgang des 19. Jahrhunderts, der in seinen „Deutschen Schriften" an Paulus und am Protestantismus herbe Kritik übte. Jetzt soll die alte deutsche Art endlich wieder zum Sieg kommen.

Der oberste Lebenswert der Germanen ist die Ehre. Neben der Ehre steht die Freiheit der Nation. Diesen beiden obersten Werten müssen alle andern sich unterordnen. Das Christentum hatte die Liebe an die erste Stelle gerückt. „Heute ist es jedem aufrichtigen Deutschen klar, daß mit dieser, alle Geschöpfe der Welt gleichmäßig umfassenden Liebe ein empfindlicher Schlag gegen die Seele des nordischen Europas geführt worden ist." (S. 155.) Vor allem dadurch, daß sich diese Liebe zu dem „kirchlich-christlichen Mitleid" entwickelt hat, gegen das sich heute die germanischen Völker mit Recht empören. Denn „eine Nation, deren Mittelpunkt Ehre und Pflicht darstellte, würde nicht Faule und Verbrecher erhalten, sondern ausschalten." So muß denn der Hochstellung der barmherzigen Liebe, diesem „einheitslüsternen rasselosen Schema, gepaart mit ungesundem Subjektivismus" (S. 169) ein Ende gemacht werden.

Also: Ehre und Freiheit stehen zu oberst. Dann kommen, daraus sich unmittelbar ergebend, Mannestreue und Gefolgschaftstreue. „Wir erkennen heute, daß die zentralen Höchstwerte der römischen und der protestantischen Kirche als negatives Christentum unsrer Seele nicht entsprechen, daß sie den organischen Kräften der nordisch-rassisch bestimmten Völker im Weg stehen, ihnen Platz zu machen haben, sich neu im Sinn eines germanischen Christentums umwerten lassen müssen. Das ist der Sinn des heutigen religiösen Suchens." (S. 215.)

Alle Gebiete des Lebens haben sich dieser Umwertung zu unterwerfen. Keine der überlieferten Vorstellungen von Recht und Sittlichkeit darf aufrechterhalten werden, wenn der Bestand der Nation etwas anders fordert. So z. B. die Ehe. Gewiß müsse die Einehe geschützt und beibehalten werden. Aber wenn es sich um die Beurteilung der unehelichen Geburten handle, dann dürfe man nicht vergessen, daß die unehelichen Kinder einen Kräftezuwachs für die Nation darstellen, den diese im Zeitalter des katastrophalen Geburtenrückgangs bitter nötig habe. „Wir gehen den größten Kämpfen um die Substanz unsers Volkes entgegen; wenn aber diese Tatsache festgestellt und die Folgerungen aus ihr gezogen werden, so kommen dann alle geschlechtlich gesättigten Moralisten und Präsidentinnen unterschiedlicher Frauenorganisationen, die für Neger

und Hottentotten Pulswärmer stricken, die für die Mission der Zulukaffern eifrig Geld spenden, und eifern gegen die Unsittlichkeit, wenn ein Mensch erklärt, die Erhaltung der zu Tode gefährdeten Substanz sei das Wichtigste, etwas, vor dem alles andre zurückzustehen habe: und dies erfordere Aufzucht des gesunden deutschen Blutes." (S. 595.)

Aus solchen Voraussetzungen formt sich nun für Rosenberg das Bild einer kommenden deutschen Religion. Dieses Bild ist gegenwärtig erst noch Sehnsucht. Bisher ist das religiöse Genie noch nicht da, das aus der Sehnsucht die Erfüllung machen könnte. Deshalb darf auch „kein verantwortungsbewußter Deutscher die Forderung auf Verlassen der Kirchen an jene richten, die noch gläubig an ihnen hängen." (S. 599.) Aber eines Tages wird der religiöse Genius da sein und mit ihm die neue deutsche Religion. Dann wird zunächst das Alte Testament der Vergessenheit überliefert werden. Aus den vier Evangelien des Neuen Testaments wird man ein fünftes machen. Da wird Jesus gedeutet sein als der gewaltige Prediger und als der Zürnende im Tempel, der Mann, der sie alle mitriß und dem sie alle folgten, nicht mehr als das Opferlamm der jüdischen Propheten, nicht als der Gekreuzigte. Wenn der Versuch scheitert, ein solches Jesusbild zu gewinnen, nun — „dann sind auch die Evangelien gestorben." Paulus hat in der neuen deutschen Religion natürlich kein Daseinsrecht. Ueber der Forderung der Nächstenliebe wird die Forderung der nationalen Ehre stehen. Um Dogmen wird man in der kommenden deutschen Nationalkirche nicht streiten. Man wird nur fordern, daß die Menschen die großen Werte der deutschen Rassenseele anerkennen und sich zu eigen machen.

Hand in Hand damit geht die Umgestaltung des Kultus. Die Kruzifixe werden aus den Kirchen und von den Dorfstraßen verschwinden. Neben der Siegergestalt des „heldischen Jesus" wird der „Gott mit dem Speer" wieder erscheinen, also Wotan. Bilder und Sprüche des Meisters Eckehart und andrer großer deutscher Prediger werden die Gotteshäuser schmücken. Und nicht mehr um Marienfäulen, sondern um Standbilder der deutschen Feldgrauen wird das Dorf sich Sonntags versammeln.

Soweit Rosenberg.

Das umfangreiche Buch ist kein wissenschaftliches Werk. Es ist das Buch eines vielseitig gebildeten Dilettanten, wie es einst H. St. Chamberlains „Grundlagen des 19. Jahrhunderts" auch waren. Und es ist ein Bekenntnis. Es hat daher gar keinen Wert, sich mit den Einzelheiten auseinanderzusetzen. Wer irgendein Gebiet wissenschaftlich kennt, wird Angriffspunkte in Hülle und Fülle finden. Auf dem Gebiet des Neuen Testaments und der

Kirchengeschichte wird man die Urteile besonders schmerzlich empfinden, die offenbar auf Mangel an Sachkenntnis zurückgehen. Aber wie gesagt: das Buch ist ein Bekenntnis. So muß es genommen werden. Man wird mit ihm nur fertig, wenn man ein eigenes Bekenntnis dagegen stellt und wenn man sich klar macht, welche Wirkungen von dem Buch ausgehen, wo man daher seinen Einfluß zu fassen bekommen muß, wenn man sich mit ihm auseinandersetzen will.

3.

An drei Stellen wirkt der Geist des Rosenbergschen Buches sich aus — wobei noch einmal daran erinnert werden muß, daß dies Buch der Ausdruck einer geistigen Bewegung ist, die nicht Rosenberg geschaffen hat, sondern deren Repräsentant er ist.

Die erste dieser Stellen ist die **„Deutsche Glaubensbewegung,"** die das vorweg nehmen will, was Rosenberg dem kommenden religiösen Genius der Deutschen vorbehalten wollte: die Schaffung einer deutschen Religion und einer deutschen Kirche. Zu dieser Deutschen Glaubensbewegung haben sich verschiedene Kreise zusammengeschlossen, die sich jedesmal um eine bestimmte Persönlichkeit gruppieren. Es sind die Kreise um den Tübinger Professor Hauer, um den Prähistoriker Hermann Wirth, um den Grafen Reventlow, den Herausgeber des „Reichswart," und um den Leipziger Professor Bergmann.

Man tut dieser Bewegung zu viel Ehre an, wenn man sie ernst nimmt. Hauer ist gewiß eine ernste Persönlichkeit, aber ein Eigenbrödler. Hermann Wirth, der eine ganze prähistorische Welt nebst dem versunkenen Erdteil Atlantis rekonstruiert, ist trotz mancher wertvoller Ergebnisse seiner Arbeiten ein Phantast. Bergmann schreibt Bücher von einer Oberflächlichkeit, die dem Stande der deutschen Universitätsprofessoren nicht zur Ehre gereichen. Und Graf Reventlow ist Journalist und Politiker, nicht ohne Kraft und Frische. Eine religiöse Persönlichkeit ist keiner unter ihnen allen. Und eine neue Religion nebst Kirche zu gründen ohne religiöse Persönlichkeiten — nun ja, das ist ein Zeichen der Zeit, aber kein Zeichen für eine Zukunft.

Die zweite dieser Stellen, an denen die Gedankenwelt Rosenbergs dauernd begegnet, sind **die weltanschaulichen Arbeiten der Partei und des Staates.** Der Nationalsozialismus will eine Weltanschauung sein. Die Durchsetzung dieser Weltanschauung ist ihm ein entscheidendes Anliegen. Ueberall, in den Arbeitslagern, in den Schulungskursen für Beamte und Parteifunktionäre, in der Presse und im Rundfunk, überall wird weltanschauliche Bildung von Staatswegen getrieben. Und diese weltanschauliche Unterweisung geht im Geist Rosenbergs.

Hier ist nun der Punkt, der zum Verständnis der kirchlichen Kämpfe in Deutschland fest im Auge behalten werden muß. Der Nationalsozialismus will eine Weltanschauung sein. Im Mittelpunkt dieser Weltanschauung stehen die Gedanken über Volk und Staat. Es handelt sich also um eine durch und durch politisch bestimmte Gedankenwelt. Und der Staat sieht es als seine vornehmste Aufgabe an, die großen Gedanken, die da lebendig geworden sind, aus der Welt des reinen Ideals herauszunehmen und sie zu praktischer Wirklichkeit zu machen. Die nationalsozialistische Weltanschauung gilt ihm daher als ein Bestandteil der Staatspolitik. Was dieser Weltanschauung entgegen ist, empfindet er als gegen den Staat gerichtet.

Im Einzelnen und Konkreten gibt es da zwar keine feste und einheitliche Linie. Aber im Großen und im Ganzen ist die Gedankenwelt, um die es sich hier handelt, klar und bestimmt.

Die Religion soll grundsätzlich nicht in den Bereich dieser vom Staat vertretenen und mit staatlichen Machtmitteln geförderten Weltanschauung gehören. Sie soll frei sein. Immer wieder, auch bei Rosenberg, begegnet die Verwahrung gegen jede Machtpolitik in Religionssachen. Im nationalsozialistischen Staat könne jeder nach seiner Fasson selig werden. Nun aber erhebt sich die Frage: Was ist Religion und was ist Weltanschauung? Wie weit muß lebendige Religion auch „Weltanschauung" bilden?

Man braucht nur ein paar praktische Beispiele zu nehmen: Hat die Kirche vom Standort des Glaubens aus etwas zur Sterilisation der Verbrecher, zum Arierparagraphen, zur Beurteilung der unehelichen Geburten zu sagen oder nicht? Nach unwidersprochener Zeitungsmeldung hat der brandenburgische Oberpräsident Kube — übrigens der eigentliche Begründer der „Deutschen Christen" — einen Pfarrer in das Konzentrationslager bringen lassen, weil er bestritten habe, daß der Glaube aus dem Blut komme, also eine Sache der Rasse sei; in einer solchen Frage, habe der Oberpräsident gesagt, könne der Staat nicht mit sich spaßen lassen, während er sich in konfessionelle Angelegenheiten grundsätzlich nicht einmische.

Wenn man das überdenkt, so sieht man, wie schwierig die Abgrenzung zwischen der Interessensphäre des Staates und zwischen den Lebensäußerungen der Religion sein muß. Es kann gar nicht ausbleiben, daß die staatlich und politisch Empfindenden etwas für politisch erklären, wovon die Kirchen und die religiös Lebendigen sagen, es sei eine rein religiöse Angelegenheit.

Tatsächlich ist die Pflege der Rosenbergschen Anschauungen, selbst wenn sie dem, was Rosenberg unter Religion versteht, aus dem Weg geht, gegensätzlich gegen das Christentum eingestellt. Man kann eben nicht eine neue Werttafel schaffen und die Werte des Christentums dabei an die zweite Stelle drücken, ohne mit dem

christlichen Glauben in Konflikt zu kommen. So ist es denn auch durchaus folgerichtig, wenn es zwischen staatlich-politischen Stellen und zwischen kirchlichen zu Reibungen und zu Schwierigkeiten gekommen ist. Diese Reibungen könnten nur dadurch aus der Welt geschafft werden, daß über die Abgrenzung der staatlich-politischen und der religiösen Sphäre eine praktische Verständigung gefunden würde, die aber sehr anders aussehen müßte, als es Rosenbergs Anschauungen entsprechen würde.

Die dritte der Stellen, an denen Rosenbergs Gedankenwelt begegnet, ist die Kampforganisation der „Deutschen Christen." Von diesen muß nun noch im Besonderen die Rede sein.

4.

Die „Deutschen Christen" traten zum ersten Mal im Herbst 1932 in die Erscheinung, als Wahlen für die kirchlichen Körperschaften bevorstanden. Damals trat ein kleiner Kreis von kirchlich interessierten Nationalsozialisten zusammen, unter ihnen der junge Pfarrer Hossenfelder, um mit Hilfe besonderer Kandidatenlisten die kirchlichen Körperschaften für den Nationalsozialismus zu erobern. Auf Wunsch Adolf Hitlers erhielten diese Listen den allgemeineren Namen „Deutsche Christen," weil der Parteiname im kirchlichen Kampf vermieden werden sollte.

Als dann Ende Januar 1933 der Reichspräsident die Führung der Staatsgeschäfte an Adolf Hitler gab, erhielt die Bewegung einen ungeheuren Auftrieb. Sie wurde von der stürmischen Machtentfaltung der Partei mit fortgerissen. Sie forderte die Kirchenleitung für sich. Als ihr Kandidat, der Wehrkreispfarrer Müller, von den Kirchenregierungen nicht zum Reichsbischof bestimmt wurde, griff der preußische Staat im Sinne der Deutschen Christen ein. Für den Wahlkampf, der den damals entstandenen Konflikt beenden sollte, stellte die Partei ihren gesamten Apparat in den Dienst der Deutschen Christen. Der Führer, Adolf Hitler, hielt am Vorabend der Wahl selbst eine Rede für die Bewegung, die über alle deutschen Radiostationen verbreitet wurde. So errangen die Deutschen Christen in den meisten kirchlichen Körperschaften die Mehrheit. Sie entfernten fast sämtliche alten Bischöfe, Generalsuperintendenten und Mitglieder der obersten kirchlichen Behörden und ersetzten sie durch Männer ihrer eigenen Bewegung. Heute beherrschen sie die evangelische Kirche, abgesehen von Bayern und Württemberg, so gut wie absolut.

Erst allmählich klärte die Bewegung sich in sich selbst. Sie hatte im Anfang, um schnell an die Macht zu kommen, alles an sich gezogen, was zur Mitarbeit bereit war. Sie hatte in stürmischem Durcheinander allerlei Ziele mehr oder weniger revolutionärer Art proklamieren lassen. Sie hatte sich ihre Aufgabe unter dem

Eindruck der gewaltigen Aufwärtsentwicklung immer umfassender gestellt. Sie wollte ein „artgemäßes Christentum" ausprägen. Sie wollte dem deutschen Volk eine neue, männliche Frömmigkeit schenken. Sie wollte die Predigt des Evangeliums „volksverbunden" gestalten. Und immer wieder hörte man das Ziel hinstellen: die Zusammenfassung aller Kirchen Deutschlands zu einer deutschen, christlichen Nationalkirche.

Dann kam der 5. November 1933. Bei der großen Versammlung der Berliner Deutschen Christen erklärte der Gauleiter in Anwesenheit zahlreicher deutsch-christlicher „Prominenter," daß man nun endlich verwirklichen müsse, was Rosenberg gefordert habe. Er nannte den Namen Rosenbergs nicht, bediente sich aber der von ihm geprägten Sätze, wortgetreu nach dem „Mythus des 20. Jahrhunderts." Das Alte Testament sei das Buch der Zuhälter- und Viehtreibergeschichten und müsse verschwinden. Das Kruzifix müsse andern Symbolen Platz machen usw. Die große Versammlung — etwa 20,000 Menschen — nahm das alles mit stürmischem Beifall auf, ohne Widerspruch von irgendeiner Seite.

Nun aber brach der Sturm auf der Gegenseite los. Die Folge war, daß jener Berliner Gauleiter mit seiner Anhängerschaft aus der Bewegung ausschied und eine eigene Bewegung auftat, und daß die Deutschen Christen, nachdem der Pfarrer Hossenfelder von der Führung zurückgetreten war, sich wieder auf die ursprüngliche Aufgabe einstellten, die Nationalsozialisten in der Kirche zu sammeln, nicht aber eine neue Form des Glaubens zu vertreten.

Wer aber begriffen hat, was es um den Nationalsozialismus ist, wie schwer es ist, die Grenze zwischen nationalsozialistischer Weltanschauung und zwischen christlicher Religion zu ziehen, wie sehr anderseits der Nationalsozialismus darauf besteht, nicht eine beliebige Parteibewegung zu sein, sondern eben eine Weltanschauung, jene Weltanschauung des völkischen Idealismus, die einen neuen Abschnitt der Geschichte einleitet, der wird auch verstehen, daß sich mit dieser Umstellung im tiefsten Grund nichts geändert hat. Nach wie vor sind die Deutschen Christen eine Gemeinschaft von Nationalsozialisten, die es für ihr Aufgabe halten, die evangelische Kirche für das Gedankengut des Nationalsozialismus zu erobern und sie der Staatsführung als getreue Mitarbeiterin an den großen völkischen Aufgaben der Zukunft zur Verfügung zu halten. Sie sind dabei überzeugt, daß sie auf diese Weise den Kontakt mit der großen Masse des deutschen Volkes gewinnen werden, daß die Gefahr einer Isolierung und Verknöcherung der Kirche in einer Zeit der deutschen Wiedergeburt dadurch vermieden werde, und daß nunmehr eine Volksmission größten Stiles einsetzen könne. Die alte Anschauung, die in der Kirche etwas Eigenständiges neben dem Staat

sieht, lehnen sie ab. Sie sehen Staat und Kirche als Einheit, weil beide demselben Volk dienen.

Ein Ideal ist freilich praktisch bereits zu Grab getragen worden. Man hatte im Anfang in den Reihen der Deutschen Christen viel von der „Totalen Kirche" gesprochen, die das Gegenstück zum totalen Staat bilden werde. Also eine Kirche, die jeden Deutschen erfassen und das gesamte Leben des Volkes ergreifen oder wenigstens umrahmen werde. Um dieses großen Zieles willen wollte man allerlei Einbußen in Kauf nehmen in Bezug auf Lehre und Freiheit der Kirche. Nicht mehr ein Nachlaufen hinter den Einzelnen her! Sondern die gesamte deutsche Jugend tritt des Sonntags zu kurzer Feierstunde zusammen. Die großen Volksfeste eingeleitet durch religiöse Feiern für die Gesamtheit, und so fort.

Staat und Partei haben erklärt, daß an dergleichen nicht zu denken sei. Es müsse jeder nach seiner Fasson selig werden. Und in der Tat: die „Totale Kirche" wäre nur denkbar, wenn es eine einzige Kirche in Deutschland gäbe. Noch hängen einige Deutsche Christen, so z. B. der Thüringer Zweig, diesem Gedanken nach. Und von Zeit zu Zeit hört man es auch von politischen Stellen erklären: der Nationalsozialismus werde, da mit Protestantismus und Katholizismus nichts anzufangen sei, von sich aus die einige deutsche Kirche schaffen. Aber im Ernst glaubt niemand mehr an dergleichen. Der Katholizismus hat sich auch in den Stürmen dieser Monate als ein Faktor erwiesen, den man nicht einfach beiseitewischen kann.

Der Ausgangspunkt der Deutschen Christen ist jedenfalls der staatspolitische. Sie sind nicht eine religiöse, sondern eine staatspolitische Bewegung innerhalb der evangelischen Kirche. Hier liegt ihre Leidenschaft. „Wir sind vom Nationalsozialismus gefressen!" sagte der Landesbischof Coch in Dresden.

Hier setzt nun der Widerspruch der Gegner ein. Sie sagen — und berufen sich dafür auch auf ein bekanntes Wort von Adolf Hitler —, daß es verfehlt sei, eine Kirche vom Politischen her umformen und reformieren zu wollen. Sie sagen, daß ein solches Unterfangen notwendig zu einer Ueberfremdung der Kirche mit politischen Gesichtspunkten und zu einer Verfälschung des Evangeliums führen müsse.

Sie weisen dafür auf die zahllosen Kundgebungen der Deutschen Christen und der neuen Landesbischöfe hin, in denen biblische Texte politisch umgedeutet werden. Also etwa das Wort des Paulus, daß Gott uns den Sieg über Sünde und Tod gegeben hat, 1. Kor. 15, in einen Dank über den Sieg des Nationalsozialismus. Oder daß zu Ostern von der Auferstehung des deutschen Volkes geredet wird und in der Passionszeit von dem Passionsweg Deutschlands bis zur Rettung durch Adolf Hitler.

Sie weisen auf die Uebertragung politischer Machtmethoden auf den Raum der Kirche hin. So wird z. B. auf den Synoden eine Aussprache nicht mehr gestattet, auch wenn es sich um Dinge von entscheidender Bedeutung für Glauben und Kirche handelt; das entspreche nicht dem Geist des neuen Deutschlands. Die Minderheit hat zu schweigen, wenn die Mehrheit bestimmt.

Sie weisen auf den Arierparagraphen hin, der ebenfalls aus dem Raum des Staates in den der Kirche übernommen worden sei, obwohl er in der Kirche aus religiösen Gründen nicht getragen werden könne.

Sie sagen vor allem, daß die Deutschen Christen, selbst auf das Stärkste von Rosenbergschen Idealen beeinflußt, außerstande seien, den Entscheidungskampf um die Geltung des christlichen Glaubens zu führen, der die geschichtliche Aufgabe der Kirche von heute auf deutschem Boden sei. Die Deutschen Christen seien parteimäßig gebunden und könnten schon deshalb einem Mann wie Rosenberg nicht entgegentreten — was auch tatsächlich nie geschehen ist. Sie seien so einseitig politisch bestimmt, daß sie religiös nur destruktiv wirken könnten, niemals aber für eine positive Leistung in Betracht kämen.

5.

In der evangelischen Kirche Deutschlands ist nun eine Gegenfront entstanden, die aus den bekenntnistreuen Pfarrern — das ist die große Mehrheit der Pastorenschaft — aus den kirchlich lebendigen Kreisen der Gemeinden und aus den beiden einzigen noch nicht „gleichgeschalteten" Landeskirchen, nämlich Bayern und Württemberg, besteht. Diese Gegenfront sieht es als ihre Aufgabe an, in dieser schweren Krisis die Frage nach der „Substanz" der Kirche mit neuem Ernst zu stellen. Was nütze es, Bischöfe mit großen goldenen Kreuzen zu haben und Versammlungen im Sportpalast mit 20,000 Menschen, wenn das, was in der Kirche verkündigt wird, mit dem Christentum des Neuen Testaments kaum noch etwas zu tun habe. Es gelte eine Erneuerung der Kirche von innen her. In einem großen Kampf der Geister dürfe man nicht vorschnell Kompromisse schließen, sondern man müsse das Panier aufwerfen und den Glauben bekennen. Was daraus werde, das werde Gott verantworten!

Es beginnt eine Sammlung von „Kerngemeinden" um die Bibel. Der Obrigkeit will man Gehorsam leisten. Aber Gehorsam gegen das deutsch-christliche Kirchenregiment in Glaubenssachen lehnt man ab. Man schließt sich in freien Bekenntnissynoden zusammen. Theologisch folgt man weithin den Gedanken von Karl Barth.

Die Kraft dieser kirchlichen Gegenfront liegt in ihrem Martyrium. Die führenden Geistlichen haben fast alle Pensionierung,

Amtsentsetzung, Disziplinarverfahren durchgemacht. Auch körperliche Mißhandlungen sind vorgekommen. Sie haben alle Machtfaktoren in Staat und Kirche gegen sich. Sie können allein auf ihrem Glauben stehen.

Was sich im Uebrigen aus dem ganzen Kampf entwickeln wird, ist noch nicht zu sagen. Es geht das auch über die Aufgabe hinaus, die sich diese Zeilen gestellt haben.

Nur soviel darf zum Schluß noch einmal gesagt werden: Es geht um eine Entscheidung von geschichtlicher Größe. In dieser Entscheidung wird nur das wirksam werden, was ganz echt ist. Die evangelische Kirche ist vor die Probe gestellt, was von ihrer Arbeit noch echt ist im Sinn des alten Evangeliums. Daraus wird eine große Reinigung kommen. Und das Ende wird, wenn nicht alle Zeichen trügen, eine neue Erweckungsbewegung sein, wie sie unsre Väter vor hundert Jahren erlebt haben. Und diese Erweckungsbewegung, die aus dem neuen biblischen Ernst der Notzeit geboren ist, wird das Antlitz der evangelischen Kirche für die kommenden hundert Jahre bestimmen.

Pastorale Seelsorge in der Jetztzeit

Dr. G. Fr. Schuetze.

Die pastorale Seelsorge ist das Schmerzenskind alles pastoralen Wirkens. Wer hätte nicht in ihr seine schwersten, und doch auch wiederum seine schönsten Stunden erlebt! Nie wird sich der treue Seelsorger so niedergeschlagen und so traurig gestimmt gefühlt haben, als wenn er von Seelsorgergängen heimkehrte. Anderseits aber wird er auch niemals so freudig gestärkt worden sein, als in der Ausübung dieses schwersten Teils unsers Berufes. Die Seelsorge ist allerdings der schwerste Teil unsers pastoralen Wirkens.

Die Predigt läßt sich ja mit der Seelsorge gar nicht vergleichen. Wer seine Homiletik wohl studiert hat, der muß imstande sein, seine Gemeinde einmal in der Woche, ja auch zwei oder dreimal, mit der Verkündigung des Wortes Gottes zu erbauen. In der Katechetik, dem Konfirmandenunterricht und der Sonntagschule, sind die Schwierigkeiten gleichfalls nicht mit denen der Seelsorge zu vergleichen. In allen diesen Funktionen deckt uns die Autorität, die hinter uns steht, die Bibel, das offenbarte Wort Gottes, der Heiland selber, von dem wir Zeugnis ablegen. Freilich, wer Jesum noch nicht im Herzen erfahren hat, für den ist das Predigen und Lehren entsetzlich schwer. Dessen Wort ist oft nicht mehr als ein tönendes Erz und eine klingende Schelle. Aber um noch so viel schwerer wird solchem Seelsorger die Seelsorge sein. Auch für ältere Geistliche wird die pastorale Seelsorge, selbst wenn sie langjährige Erfahrungen auf diesem Gebiet gesammelt haben, immer eine schwere Aufgabe, eine schwere Gewissenslast sein. In der Seelsorge steht nämlich der Mann auf sich ganz allein; wenigstens in der Ansicht so sehr vieler Gemeindeglieder, weil er da nicht im Chorrock amtiert und nicht im Gotteshaus redet. Darum sieht man so oft in ihm nur den Menschen, nur zu oft den bezahlten Angestellten, und nicht den Botschafter an Jesu Christi statt.

Darin besteht nun gleich die erste zu überwindende Schwierigkeit, unsre lieben Schäflein dahin zu bringen, daß sie es einsehen, daß ihr Seelsorger nur auf Befehl und im Namen Christi zu ihnen redet, daß es nicht ihr himmlischer Beruf ist, mit Stoßen und Beißen Böcke zu sein, sondern daß sie Schäflein des guten Hirten sein sollen, für den wir nur Unterhirten und Stellvertreter sind. Wenn irgendwo, so redet der Seelsorger am Krankenbett, oder wohin sonst ihn die Ausübung der Seelsorge rufen mag, nicht als Mensch, nicht als Privatperson, sondern als Botschafter, als Apostel Jesu Christi an die leidende Menschheit. Unser Lehren, Trösten, Mahnen und Strafen ist da gerade so sehr, wenn nicht noch mehr, Gottes Wort wie auf der Kanzel. Noch eins kommt dazu, um die

pastoralen Hausbesuche so schwer zu machen, daß sich nämlich der Besuchte stets als den Hausherren fühlt und in dem Seelsorger den, nur zu oft unwillkommenen, Gast sieht, dem er, wenn ihm seine Rede mißfällt, auch den Stuhl vor die Tür setzen kann. Es wäre gar kein so sehr übler Gedanke, seelsorgerische Besuche nur im Talar zu machen. Nur eben, daß wir uns nicht, wie Kinder hinter die Schürze der Mutter, hinter den Amtsrock („sit venia verbo") verkriechen dürfen. Vielmehr steht es in der jetzigen Zeit so, daß unsre Person unsern Rock stützen muß, daß unser Amt um unsrer Person willen geachtet wird. Unsre Person wird nicht mehr von unserm Amt getragen. Die Zeiten sind unwiderruflich vorbei, in denen der Pastor, ganz abgesehen von den ethischen Qualitäten des Mannes, um seines Amtes willen geehrt wurde. Vorbei die Zeit, da alles, was sich decken konnte mit dem Worte: „Der Pfarrer hat es gesagt," als Evangeliumswahrheit galt. Dazu hängt unsre Zeit leider viel zu lose an Gott. In der Jetztzeit steht es vielmehr so, daß man dem Pfarrer nur dann Glauben schenkt, wenn der Mann im Pfarrer als vertrauenswürdig erfunden ist.

In der jetzigen, modernen Christenheit läßt man sich den Besuch des Seelsorgers eben nur gefallen, wenn man ihn auch nicht gerne sieht. Gar weit verbreitet ist die Ansicht, daß ein Kranker rettungslos aufgegeben, ein sicherer Kandidat des Todes ist, wenn der Pastor zu ihm ans Bett tritt. „Steht es denn so schlimm mit mir, daß der Pastor kommt?" Auch wenn man dem Pastor gnädigst den Zutritt zum Krankenbett gestattet, so geschieht es nur zu häufig nach einer eindringlichen Vermahnung an denselben, er möge doch nicht mit dem Kranken beten, oder vom Tod und Sterben mit ihm reden. Das rege ihn zu sehr auf und möge seiner Genesung schaden. Ja aber, was soll denn der Pastor am Krankenbett, wenn er nicht Seelsorger sein darf? Wir glauben, nicht mit Unrecht diese krankhafte Abneigung gegen pastorale Krankenbesuche dem Umstand zuschreiben zu können, daß es den Leuten viel mehr um die Gesundung des Leibes als um die Rettung der Seele zu tun ist. Die Menschen von heute sind weltselig und nicht eschatologisch eingestellt. Es fehlt der lebendige Osterglaube. Und darum dürfen wir wohl ohne Widerspruch behaupten, daß die Seelsorge in der Jetztzeit unter dem Zeichen steht, dem widersprochen wird.

Aber das darf uns nicht abschrecken, gerade auf diesem Gebiet treue Haushalter über Gottes Geheimnisse zu sein; denn das Ziel aller Seelsorge ist doch die Ausdehnung des Gottesreiches in der Gemeinde. Wir gehen nicht an die Krankenbetten, um die Kranken auf den Tod vorzubereiten, sondern auf das Leben. Wir kommen ja auch nicht mit dem Wort des Todes, sondern mit dem Wort des Lebens. Noch viel weniger dürfen wir unsre geistliche Aufgabe darin sehen, geistliche Pflästerchen auf die Wunden der Sünde

im Gewissen zu kleben, sondern, wo es notwendig ist, müssen wir auch an Krankenbetten mit der Johannespredigt stehen: „Tut Buße und bekehret euch“ und der andern: „Es ist nicht recht, daß du dies oder das tust.“ In allem unserm Reden muß das unsre Hauptsorge sein, daß die Herrschaft Jesu Christi im Herzen des Besuchten gestärkt werde. Unsre Besuche haben nicht den Zweck, dem Kranken das Sterben zu erleichtern, sondern wir wollen ihn auf das Leben vorbereiten, auf ein neues, besseres Leben, sei es in dieser Welt, oder im ewigen Leben.

Zu diesem Zweck darf vor allen Dingen der Pastor sich nicht auf das Niveau dieser Welt herabziehen lassen. Stellet euch nicht dieser Welt gleich. Die Weltförmigkeit wird ja wohl im Augenblick gern gesehen, wird aber später bei gegebener Gelegenheit unfehlbar dem Pastor vorgeworfen, am liebsten in dem Vorwurf: „Der Pastor ist ja gar kein Christ.“ Die guten Leutchen sind natürlich durchaus nicht berufene Richter, die über des Seelsorgers Christenstand ein Urteil fällen können, noch dürften. Sie tun es aber doch. Und so ist dem Pastor oft die Gelegenheit zum weiteren segensreichen Wirken für die Zukunft abgeschnitten. Da entsteht nun noch die Frage: Soll der Pastor jedesmal am Krankenbett beten? Der Ton liegt auf dem jedesmal. Ich halte nicht dafür. Wohl soll er jedesmal Zeugnis ablegen von der Hoffnung, die in uns ist. Aber das muß nicht jedesmal in der Form eines Gebetes geschehen. Das richtet sich ganz nach den Umständen. Ist der Kranke und sind die Angehörigen nicht in der geistlichen Verfassung, daß man mit ihnen zum Thron Gottes treten kann, so lasse man es lieber, als daß man das Gebet entweihe.

Besonders gräbt sich der Pastor selber eine Grube, in die er früher oder später sicher hineinstürzt, wenn er dem Verlangen der Angehörigen nachgibt und dem ohne Buße dahinfahrenden Sünder eine Leichenrede hält, die ihn in den Himmel lobt. Einem Säufer wurde einst auf das Verlangen der Witwe eine Leichenrede gehalten über den Text: „Ich habe den guten Kampf gekämpft, ich habe den Glauben gehalten usw.“ Und dabei starb der Mann im „Delirium tremens.“ Schon während der Textverlesung stießen sich die Leute gegenseitig an, und mit des Pastors Segenswirken war es für alle Zeit in der Gemeinde vorbei. Da lobe ich mir einen Bruder — er ist jetzt längst entschlafen — der einst solchen kniffligen Fall hatte. Seine Leichenrede bestand aus den Worten: „Richtet nicht, so werdet ihr nicht gerichtet, verdammt nicht, so werdet ihr nicht verdammt, vergebet, so wird euch vergeben.“ Das sagte er dreimal langsam und nachdrücklich, sagte Amen und verließ die Kanzel. Diese kurze Rede wirkte mehr als irgendeine lange Predigt. Sie strafte die Neugierigen, erweckte die Ungläubigen zum Nachdenken und tröstete die wirklich Frommen.

Der Pastor muß zu schweigen wissen, wenn er nicht reden kann. Kann er mit gutem Gewissen über den Toten nichts Gutes reden, dann schweige er lieber ganz über ihn und beschränke sich auf eine allgemeine Rede über den Tod und die Auferstehung. Vorher aber ist es angebracht, an den Angehörigen ernstliche Seelsorge zu üben, ihnen die Unmöglichkeit des Lobes offen darzulegen und, falls sich die Leute nicht weisen lassen wollen, lieber das Begräbnis ganz abzulehnen als unwahr zu sein. Noch einmal, die Weltförmigkeit ist das größte Hindernis für die erfolgreiche Seelsorge. Zwar werden die davon Betroffenen zuerst gewaltig über den Pastor herziehen; aber letzten Endes werden sie ihm doch die Achtung nicht versagen und seinem Worte williger Gehör schenken, als wenn er ihnen ihren Willen tut und im weichlichen Befolgen des weltseligen Spruches: „De mortuis nil nisi bene," der Wahrheit Gewalt antut.

Darum noch ein Bedenken: Die Weltförmigkeit des heutigen Pastors, in die er durch die vielen Vereine hineingezwungen wird, wo er der gute Mixer und berühmte „After-Dinner-Speaker" sein muß, werden ihm in der Seelsorge manchen Stein in den Weg werfen. Wer in der Woche sich an drei oder vier Banketts beteiligen muß und darum nicht gefunden werden kann, wenn er zu einem Krankenbett gerufen wird, von dem denken die Leute, manchmal nicht mit Unrecht, daß er für Kranke und Leidende kein Herz hat, und dann kommt wieder der Spruch: Der Pastor ist ja gar kein Christ.

Einen in langer Praxis erprobten Rat möchte ich meinen Lesern empfehlen: Gehe nicht zu einem Krankenbesuch, ohne dich vorher gründlich mit Gebet auf denselben vorzubereiten. Es tut kein gut, am Krankenbett aufs Geratewohl die Bibel aufzuschlagen und irgendein Bibelwort der Seelsorge zu Grunde zu legen. Auch macht es einen schlechten Eindruck, wenn der Pastor lange erst in der Bibel herumblättert, ehe er etwas Passendes findet. Das soll er zu Hause tun, und nicht erst am Krankenbett. Freilich sehr oft wird man dabei bemerken, daß alle unsre Vorbereitung verkehrt war, daß es in den Herzen des Kranken und der Angehörigen ganz anders aussieht, als man erwartet hat. Dann allerdings muß uns der Heilige Geist geben, was wir reden sollen. Das aber befreit uns nicht von der Verpflichtung, uns auf unsre Besuche gründlich vorzubereiten.

Zum Schluß möge es mir erlaubt sein, etliche positive Forderungen für eine ersprießliche Seelsorge kurz zu rekapitulieren:

1. Seelsorge muß geübt werden. Jesu Befehl „Weide meine Schafe" läßt uns keine Möglichkeit, diesen Befehl zu umgehen.

2. Am notwendigsten ist die Seelsorge an Krankenbetten. Gerade in Zeiten irdischen Uebelergehens ist das christliche Herz am besten vorbereitet, den Samen des göttlichen Wortes zu empfangen.

3. Der Pastor muß benachrichtigt werden, wo Seelsorge nötig ist. Die Kranken können nach dem Arzt senden, warum denn nicht auch nach dem Seelenarzt? Wenn der Pastor erst durch das Wochenblättchen erfährt, daß dieser oder jener ins Hospital gegangen ist, so ist das eine Verachtung des Botschafters an Christi statt und damit des Heilandes selber, die wiederum Gegenstand ernstester Seelsorge sein muß.

4. Die Seelsorge darf sich nicht auf das Trösten allein beschränken. In Fällen, wo die Angehörigen sehnsüchtig auf den Tod des Kranken warten, darf nicht von Trost die Rede sein. Da muß es heißen: So demütigt euch nun.

5. Auch bei den Kranken selber darf der Bußruf nicht fehlen. „Und danach das Gericht" muß dem kranken Sünder die so gern sich schließenden Augen öffnen, daß unser Gott ein eifriger Gott ist.

6. Erst nach dem Gesetz kommt das Evangelium. Wie in der Bibel das Alte Testament vor dem Neuen Testament kommt, so in der Seelsorge der Bußruf vor dem Heilsruf.

7. Das Gebet ist das beste Mittel aller Seelsorge, vor, während und nach dem Krankenbesuch.

EDITORIALS

ONCE MORE, THE MERGER BETWEEN THE EVANGELICALS AND THE REFORMED

While I am writing this, the consummation of the union of our Church with the Reformed is still a matter of the future. When this comes before the eyes of our public it will be a historical fact. Naturally, the question, will it be a success? is in the minds, if not on the lips, of all of us. The Editor does not hesitate to say that he has no doubts about it.

In the first place, the union movement in American Protestantism has already produced some very worth-while consolidations in the United States and in Canada. The hope some had, right after the War, of a union of all the Protestant Churches of our country, was short-lived. The Methodists were the first to pour water into the heady wine of such idealism. But the organic union of Churches of kindred faith and tradition has come to pass in a number of instances. And what Churches have more in common than the Reformed and the Evangelicals? Their kinship is not based only on spiritual grounds, but even on the unity of race. It is true that the split between Lutherans and Reformed occurred already in the very birth period of Protestantism. Still, in the four centuries since then we all ought to have come to see that while there ought to be unity in essentials, there may be liberty in non-essentials.

Some of us have a vague recollection that the Reformed many years ago summed up their faith in the *Five Points of Calvinism.* It was the Synod of Dort that did this, more than three centuries ago. The five points were: the doctrines of absolute predestination (not dependent on any human act prior to faith), particular redemption, total depravity, irresistible grace, and the perseverance of the saints. We are pretty sure that the Reformed of today are not "sold" on these doctrines in the same extreme manner as were the fathers at Dort. The Heidelberg Catechism, as far as we know, does not lay down any hard and fast pronouncements on any of these five points. Besides, the Synod of Dort in its controversy, had to do with the Arminians, not with the Lutherans.

The Reformed, however, did, and do today, differ from the Lutherans in regard to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. It is on this doctrine, as everyone knows, that Luther in 1529 (at Marburg) broke with Zwingli. But the Evangelical Synod, from its

very beginning, does not impose a Lutheran conception of the Lord's Supper on its members. It welcomes to the Lord's Table all penitent and believing Christians whether they subscribe to the Reformed interpretation or the Lutheran. As a daughter church of the Prussian Union of 1817, its very constitution aims to make it possible for Lutherans and Reformed to both feel at home in her. I remember well a conversation I had with a pastor of the United Lutheran Church (of this country), quite a while ago, about this. When I explained to him our policy in this particular matter, he replied, with a note of scorn in his voice: "Then your Synod hasn't any definite opinion on the Lord's Supper?" To him it was an unforgivable mistake on the part of the Evangelical Synod not to speak where the Word had spoken, and an attempt to harmonize at the expense of truth. To us it was, and is, the only way how a "mild" Lutheranism and a "mild" Calvinism could come together. The Reformed in their teaching about the Lord's Supper emphasize the fact that the sacraments are signs and *seals* which *assure* us of our real part in the grace of God. That is an important feature of the sacramental act and ought to be made use of by us.

The experience of the Church in Germany, now reaching back over more than a century, ought to show that it is well possible for Evangelicals and Reformed to go together without any violence to the dictates of conscience. Circumstances have now even compelled the different Landes- (or provincial) Kirchen of the fatherland to merge in a "Reichskirche," with a "Reichsbischof." The differences between Lutheran and Reformed at this time seem a small thing to them as the State, or government, lays its heavy hand on its administration and—perhaps soon—its inner life.

We are, in this editorial, dwelling mainly on the doctrinal aspect of the union and are finding no reason to fear that the brethren on the one side or the other will in the future be threatened with any sacrifice of conscience. Besides, let us not forget that doctrines and especially, doctrinal rigor, do not today command the attention they were given in the past. That does not mean that we are to think lightly of what the Word says of Jesus and the way to the Father. However, the Church is challenged everywhere today as to its guidance in the ethical questions. Can she produce a social ethic that will help to solve the burning questions of the moment? What contribution can she make to the economic problems that weigh so heavily on all of us? With these things in view, it seems preposterous to let small things stand in the way of a greater unity. If it is still true that there is strength in unity, then our merger is a step in the right direction.

There may be questions of organization, of institutions and

enterprises along various lines that need coordination; financial problems may give great concern. All this will require time, study, patience. Those of us who have been able to get in touch with the Reformed, as we have here in Cleveland, haven't a doubt that we shall get along nicely with these brethren. We suppose that the Reformed in other cities, states and sections are about the same people we have here. If this assumption is correct we look forward to the future without great apprehensions. They are pretty much flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone. The Reformed in the Eastern states who have been there a long time may be more "Americanized" than we are, having retained less of the German language and viewpoint than is still to be found in our Synod. Still, we are all in the melting pot, may we not give up too soon what deserves to live, and may what has real survival value endure and win out.

SHOULD CHRISTIANITY "SHARE" WITH OTHER FAITHS?

In these latter years religious discussion has often operated with a new term: Sharing. The term is used to designate the attitude towards other world views and religions. It is claimed that even the Christian religion should be willing to deal with other religions in the spirit and readiness of sharing. This sharing implies that Christians should not only try to communicate to other religionists their own treasures of truth but also assimilate from them the rays of light contained in their faith. Missionaries should not so much seek to make converts to save them from damnation; they should aim to make the heathen participants in the "abundant life," and in this process do justice to whatever other world religions contribute to full-orbed religious knowledge.

The Oxford Group (or "First Century Christian Fellowship") uses the "sharing" term very familiarly. But with them it has a different meaning. It is part of the religious technique which they employ. In one of the first stages the religious worker in trying to put the man he is seeking to influence in a receptive mood, will perhaps tell of a sin he—the worker—himself committed at one time, and so induce the other person to tell of similar faults he has been guilty of. They call it a "sharing of sin," and the object is to lead the seeker to accept forgiveness of sin. Thus the sharing in this case has nothing to do with mutual sharing of religious truth.

When, however, we turn to the "Fellowship of Faiths," recently organized, the sharing feature is quite obvious. It is an association of Christians, Jews and any kind of religion or even

non-religion. By coming together, they want to establish friendly relations between the different groups, and the idea is that they meet on a basis of equality and that each faith represented in the group may benefit the other and be benefited by it. The Jews seem especially interested in this organization. We, at least, heard a talk by a Jewish Rabbi on it and he recommended the movement very highly. This writer told the Rabbi that Christians considered their religion the only true one and that we could never grant, therefore, that religious equality that seemed to be the tacit presupposition of the organization. The majority of the brethren present, though, appeared to side with the Rabbi. Of course, it really was more polite to say yes to the Rabbi than no.

Owing to Hitler's rabid Anti-semitism and its disastrous consequences, just now the *Jews* enjoy considerable sympathy and good will in non-German countries. People feel that we have a good deal in common with them and that this should rather be stressed and not that which separates. The "Christian Century" has always been very friendly to the Jews. In a recent issue it pleads for a free meeting of the two religions on the basis of respect and equality and sees a solution of the religious problem in the willingness of Judaism "to share its most precious goods of the spirit with the Gentile culture with which it is surrounded." Fancy our surprise when in the Christian Century's issue of April 25 there now appears a reply to this pro-Jewish editorial by a Jewish student. In this reply he says Christianity can never be willing to meet the Jew on a basis of equality. But more than that. He says, "I know of no goods of the spirit which the Jews have kept behind bar and lock fearing to expose them to the world. To hope that if the Jew shares this God-knows-what with Christianity, there is ground to believe that in this direction lies a solution, is simply good natured Utopianism." "The vast majority of Jews," he goes on to say, "do not remain Jews by choice. Basically, the Jew hates his Jewishness, and bewails its fate. The only force that stiffens his neck and makes him glory in his Jewishness is the opposition of the outside world." The Anti-semitism of the past and present has kept the Jewish religion and race alive. If persecution and violence and ostracism cease, there will be no more Jews in America. Intermarriage will be the solution. "The Jews know that spiritually they are a people without a country, ships without an anchor. At the moment they are standing at the very brink of the Rubicon—waiting to see whether they will be welcome on the other shore." It remains to be seen what will be the reaction of Judaism to this young man's interpretation.

The "sharing" idea has recently been given a prominent place in the *foreign mission* field. It is now more than a year that the

Laymen's Foreign Missionary Inquiry was carried out and put in book form under the title of "Rethinking Missions." The theological portion of that report provoked a great deal of opposition. It took the position that the heathen religions would continue to remain and that we should have to reckon with that fact. Each religion should stimulate the other in growth, towards the ultimate goal, "unity in the completest religious truth." Here then the "sharing," discussed in this editorial, would be given its natural and rightful place. Missionaries should not so much combat the other religions, but should, in conjunction with them, combat secularism. The "Christian Century" correctly said that Modernism had found expression in this report, and asked: Is Modernism ready to take over the missionary enterprise?

We knew that Modernism was not ready, we knew that Modernism had never done much for Missions and would not in the future. As Dr. Speer points out with such a super-abundance of evidence in the book discussed by us in May, the Christian faith back of the missionary movement in all periods of the Church's history, has always been the faith in Jesus, the Son of God and Man, our Savior, Redeemer and Lord. There has never been any Syncretism with other religions in this world-conquering and transforming faith. The Church was always willing to share its faith with heathen nations and to make them disciples of Christ. But it has never tried to share with heathen religions the task of leading the world to the truth. There is nothing of truth in any heathen religion which is not also, and in a fuller way, in Christ. We should fight secularism in conjunction with the heathen religions, say some. Why, the very attempts of the secularists in heathen lands are called forth by the corruption of truth and life brought about by their teachers and teachings of religion.

So let us get this idea of sharing right. We are ready to learn from and assimilate the racial and natural characteristics of the nations we come in contact with, such as sublety, sense of law, gift of beauty, depth, acumen, practical sense. We are eager to learn their history, viewpoint, traditions. We avoid controversy as much as possible, but the way to life and truth is Christ, and every other religious teacher has to sit at his feet. Sitting there, he may first see in him a teacher only, as Nicodemus did, but in time Calvary and Easter will open his eyes and he will greet him as Redeemer and Lord of life.

Versöhnung von Glaube und Wissen

Es ist wahr, daß für manche eine Themafassung wie die obige etwas altmodisch erscheint. Unsre Zeit und die Kirche in der Zeit befaßt sich fast ausschließlich mit praktischen und ethischen Dingen und nicht mit Theologie. Das soziale Evangelium nimmt das Interesse so sehr in Beschlag, daß für das individuelle Evangelium, seine Probleme und Werte kaum Zeit und Kraft übrigbleiben. Es erfordert wirklich eine gute Portion Mut, wenn ein Mann wie Barth sagt, es sei eine moderne Kinderkrankheit, sich der Theologie zu schämen, und er sei über diese Schwäche hinaus.

Das Verhältnis von Glaube und Wissen, von Theologie und Wissenschaft ist ein so fundamentales Problem, daß es fast von Anfang der Kirche an die Geister beschäftigt hat. Der Herr sagt (Matth. 11): „Was du verborgen hast den Weisen und Klugen, hast du geoffenbart den Unmündigen." Aber sobald das Evangelium in die Welt hinausdrang und die Oberschicht der Gebildeten erreichte, erstanden solche, die das Evangelium und den Glauben auch vor dem Verstand und der Philosophie zu rechtfertigen suchten. Wir nennen nur von der Reihe der Apologeten Justinus Martyr und den glänzenden Katecheten Origenes. Als die Kirche die Welt erobert hatte und ihre Lehre mit unumstrittener Autorität verkünden konnte, unternahmen es doch ihre Scholastiker zu zeigen, daß zwischen Kirchenglaube und Philosophie (besonders der des Aristoteles) die schönste Harmonie herrsche. Zwar seien manche Lehren der Kirche über die Vernunft hinaus, aber keine seien gegen die Vernunft.

In der katholischen Kirche behauptete der Kirchenglaube stets sein Uebergewicht gegenüber dem Weltwissen.

In der protestantischen Kirche kam die Zeit, wo der Glaube mehr und mehr zurück gedrängt wurde. In der Periode der „Aufklärung" wurden dem Protestantismus nur noch drei Vernunftwahrheiten gelassen, nämlich Gott, Freiheit und Unsterblichkeit. Das spezifisch Christliche warf der Rationalismus als vernunftwidrig über Bord. Kant räumte mit den Gottesbeweisen auf und konnte nur einen Gott „postulieren," der den Tugendhaften in einer bessern Welt den Lohn der Tugend gebe. Ein persönliches Verhältnis zu diesem Gott kannte er nicht. Er betete nicht, weil er nicht an den Einfluß des Gebets auf das Weltgeschehen glaubte.

Es war Schleiermacher, der die Religion einigermaßen von der Philosophie loslöste. Er wies ihr den Sitz nicht im Verstand an, sondern in den Tiefen des Gemütes; sie sei das Gefühl der unbedingten Abhängigkeit. Natürlich war damit die Schwierigkeit nicht behoben. Ritschl, zu seiner Zeit, versuchte eine Lösung,

indem er den Begriff des „Werturteils" in die Diskussion einführte. Dem Christen ist Christus göttlich, er hat für ihn den Wert Gottes. Der Gläubige gibt damit kein „theoretiches" Urteil ab, er bezeugt nur seine eigne Schätzung.

Selbstverständlich konnte eine solche Lösung keine wirkliche Lösung sein. Ist das Dasein Gottes oder die Göttlichkeit Christi theoretisch zweifelhaft, was nützt dann unsre persönliche Schätzung?

In unserm Land hat sich der Glaube, oder der Theologe in allgemeinen wenig mit Philosophie befaßt, mehr aber mit der Naturwissenschaft. Die Evolutionstheorie hat eine weitgehende Aufnahme gefunden und dadurch eine Zeitlang die religiöse Auffassung stark erschüttert oder doch wenigstens modifiziert. Es ist eine tiefe Kluft zwischen Modernismus und Fundamentalismus; aber man läßt es nicht gern zum offenen Bruch kommen. Die Kirche ist zu sehr mit den Fragen der sozialen Ethik beschäftigt. Gibt das Neue Testament uns Richtlinien an die Hand, nach welchen wir eine bessere Gesellschaft und ein besseres ökonomisches System aufbauen können? Das scheint die Hauptfrage zu sein.

Immerhin, es gibt ein noch wichtigeres und grundlegenderes Problem. Gibt es einen Gott, wie die Schrift ihn lehrt und wie die Menschen ihn brauchen? Zu dieser Frage führt Diskussion und Bedürfnis immer wieder zurück. Die alten Beweise werden immer wieder, in neuem Gewande, vorgeführt. Besonders beliebt ist dieses Argument: Das Höchste, was es im Menschenleben gibt, ist Persönlichkeit. Da sie ein Produkt — und das höchste — im Entwicklungsprozeß ist, so muß es hinter diesem Prozeß Kräfte geben, welche Persönlichkeit hervorbringen, also Gott in irgendeinem Maße **persönlich** sein.

Bei diesen Argumenten bestrebt man sich, **nicht** von **Autoritäten** zu reden, weder von der Bibel, noch von Christus, oder von sonst etwas. Nach unsrer Ansicht ist das ein Fehler. Gottesbeweise bringen zu wollen und dabei von Bibel und Christo abzusehen, erscheint uns absurd. Wir bauen auf unsre Erfahrung. Was wir von der Bibel und von Christo erfahren haben, bezeugt uns, daß beide zuverlässig, daß sie Autoritäten sind. Warum denn in einer Sache, wo es wesentlich ist, sein eigenes Erfahren und Wissen durch höhere Autoritäten zu schätzen und zu ergänzen, diese Autoritäten nicht zu Wort kommen lassen?! Eigene Erfahrung, Erfahrung der Kirche, Gottes Wort und Jesu eigenes Zeugnis. Auf alle diesem baue man seinen Glauben auf. Dann sehe man sich um, was die Wissenschaft zu sagen hat. Es kann **nur eine** Wahrheit geben. Wenn Wissenschaft und Glaube in Streit liegen, so mag entweder die eine oder der andre schuld sein. Wer aber wohlbegründeten Glauben hat, läßt sich nicht leicht von skeptischer Wissenschaft irre machen.

The Christian World

The Catholic "White List" of Books

Some time ago Cardinal Hayes, of New York, appointed what has come to be known as the Cardinal's Literature Committee. This Committee publishes every quarter a list of recommended books for Catholic readers. It has come to be known as the "White List" and is printed in full in all of the New York dailies as well as in all the diocesan papers. The Committee publishes it first in a paper of their own called "The Book Survey" which is sent to all pastors with request that they give it careful study and get the list of books recommended, before their people. The spring list has just been published and I want to comment on it a little this week instead of taking up some particular book. But before saying a word about the list I would like to quote a few lines from the instructions sent out with the list. They are worthy of rather careful reading, and is there not much truth in them?

"It is no exaggeration to say that many of the evils from which we are at present suffering were produced by books—books which have weakened faith, corrupted taste, undermined morals and left most of the world floundering in despair. Today even Catholics read with equanimity books that not only picture but create these conditions, but it is high time that Catholics ceased to regard these conditions as natural phenomena for which they have no responsibility and which they are powerless to change, high time they realized that unless they exert themselves in some positive fashion to offset them they are indeed morally responsible for them.

"The duty of the individual Catholic is clear. It is solemnly incumbent upon him first of all to be certain that he himself is truly Catholic in these matters. This he can ascertain by examining his attitude toward literature in which moral issues are compromised or flouted. If his attitude is one of indifference or complaisance or approval, then the sooner he makes it a matter of conscience the better. He is almost certainly violating those principles which the Catholic Church has laid down for the spiritual safety of her children and from which no individual Catholic is free to exempt himself.

"We have lain too long under the literary dictatorship of the powers of darkness. It is time we declared our independence, first by refusing to read immoral books; second, by refusing to apologize for that refusal; third, by reading the good books which are being published in sufficient number and variety to keep readers of every taste continuously occupied and pleased."

There are about 150 books recommended of which the longest list is biography. Of the 40 biographies recommended a rather surprisingly large number are such as Protestants have been reading this

year but there are no biographies of great Protestant religious leaders. The books on religion are practically all Catholic books, but the list of essays and criticism has a few Protestant books. I think the first thought of a Protestant on reading this list is: From how great a number of the really good and significant books of the last winter his Catholic friends are shut off if they really confine themselves to this list! Leaving aside the fifteen or twenty really outstanding books on religion—such books as Dr. William Adams Brown's "God At Work" and Dr. Horton's "Theism and the Scientific Spirit" and Dr. Keller's "Karl Barth and Christian Unity" to mention only three of several books of universal import and which have attracted the attention of all cultured men—for perhaps it is natural that the Catholic Church should keep Protestant religious books from her children, on the theory evidently held by that Church that the layman is no more competent to deal with theological problems than with medical science—yet we have here only nine of the scores of novels that have been published and those nine not the greatest or best known. I will admit that the average novel is but trash and that about four out of five of them are obscene or deal with diseased minds. I admire any Church or Committee that will consign "Ann Vickers" or James Joyce's "Ulysses" to the garbage can where they belong, but surely there are more than nine novels published since last October that are healthy and deal with great, fundamental problems and have the charm of graceful literary style, and which our cultured Catholic friends not only ought to know but would thoroughly enjoy. The same thing might be said of biographies and general literature. There are some missing here that our Catholic friends should read. There is a growing number of cultured Catholics in the country who, it seems to me, cannot be treated with quite the same paternalism as their fathers endured—those who read the "Commonweal" for instance, with its fine reviews of general literature including so many books mentioned in the Cardinal's list.

Again, I wonder how far the laity allow themselves to be restricted by this list. I can imagine that many of them read the books recommended here—and well they might—but I wonder how many stop here. The modern cultured Catholic is reading the same magazine and papers his Protestant friend is reading. He has papers of his own now of a high literary standard. The "Commonwealth" mentioned above will bear comparison with the finest weeklies in the country—"The Nation," "The New Republic"—such papers as these. He sees the fine weekly literary supplements of the great dailies where every book of any worth receives extended review. I wonder if he is restrained by this list from reading these books which all his friends are reading and which are rated as real contributions to literature? Of course I know how little attention a Protestant would pay to an inhibitory list issued, let us say, by the Federal Council of Churches. Does the modern educated Catholic really pay much attention to the condemnations of the Church when it comes to the books he reads? I am simply asking the question. Meantime, whatever we may think of this list, the Protestant Church might well join with their Roman Catholic Church friends in

fighting the deluge of immoral books and magazines and movies now flowing unhindered through the land—*Frederick Lynch* in the *Reformed Church Messenger.*

Leave the Jewish Problem Alone!

By Albert Levitan

Interest in the Jews rarely lags, but in spite of the fact that periodicals are full of articles purporting to solve, once and forever, the "Jewish problem" the discussions do not get us anywhere. They fail to influence behavior, because they move in the realm of abstractions, where life cannot follow. Our first task must be to get a clear understanding of the origin of anti-semitism. Not to see how deep-rooted anti-semitism really is, how fundamentally ingrained it is in the Christian mind, is the surest way to Utopia whose capital is Bedlam.

The origin of anti-semitism lies in the proclivity of institutional minds—and all minds at this stage of civilization are institutional—to think of Jews as a *corpus*, and thus evolve the concept of an archetype "Jew," the "eternal Jew." When this piece of mental gymnastics has been performed—a process performed subconsciously by the genetical institutional mind—the next step is to drape the fictitious archetypal Jew with the character and appearance of the first Jew heard about, the story Jew. His character and appearance I need not describe. Anti-semitism is thus quite "natural" to the Christian mind.

I.

"Frankness begets frankness," said Mr. McAfee in his discussion of this question. I will, therefore, state the situation more bluntly and, I believe, more truthfully. Almost every Christian child before he attains the age of five or six has been impressed with an archetype "Jew" picture, and the picture is of the Christ killer.

This is the fundamental origin of anti-semitism. I am thoroughly aware of its economic origin, but economic motives alone, without the aid of this omnipotent memory, could never drive otherwise intelligent people into the madness of anti-semitism. Only the memory of that historical event can explain the beastly behavior of infuriated Christians toward Jews. Basically, in the Christian mind, every Jew bears responsibility for Calvary, precisely as if every Jew repeated over and over again, in every generation, the crufixion.

This analysis does not open for us optimistic vistas in the future. But it is true, and if the reader will search deep into the abyss of his soul he will be convinced of its truth. Indeed, the fact is gloomy, but if we are to analyze the Jewish problem intelligently we must face reality. Only an unflinching perlustration of reality and clear thinking will enable us to ransack the dim future through the vivid past for a solution. The following cardinal points should, therefore, be remembered:

1. In the popular institutionalized mind there exists a subconscious archetype "Jew," and it is the Christ killer.

2. On the other hand, there is no such thing as Jew in abstracto. The nominalists were right. There are only Jews—Jew X, Jew Y, Jew Z.

3. The vast majority of Jews do not remain Jews by choice. Basically, the Jew hates his Jewishness, and bewails his fate. The only force that stiffens his neck and makes him glory in his Jewishness is the opposition of the outside world. Anti-semitism is what keeps Judaism alive, and should that determinative force be removed, within a century there will be no more Jews. The individual Jew will be very glad to unload his burden.

These three cardinal points are very important. The first point definitely excludes the practicality of the optimistic solution of The Christian Century, as expressed in its editorial of February 28, 1934. There is little hope "of a free meeting of the two religions on the basis of respect and equality." No. It is a mistake to think that Christianity can ever be willing to meet Judaism on a basis of equality. The two are too closely connected, and their histories are too arabesquely reticulated. The sight of a Jew will evoke a feeling of guilt in the liberal Christian; hatred in the massman. Equality in this case would mean defeat. To hope, therefore, that "the Christian mind" can "meet Judaism on the same terms as it is willing to meet Buddhism" is only a pious wish of cultured and liberal Christian gentlemen.

Nor can I share in the sanguinity of the editors in envisaging a solution of the problem in the willingness of Judaism "to share its most precious goods of the spirit with the gentile culture with which it is surrounded." This is mere evasion. What are these "goods of the spirit?" I know of no "goods of the spirit" which they have kept behind bar and lock, fearing to expose them to the world. The Jews have contributed more or less to western culture all the time. To hope that "if he does (that is, share the God-knows-what), there is ground for belief that in this direction lies a solution" is simply the good natured utopianism we have already encountered before.

These easy pseudo-solutions can never solve the problem. Jews have no esoteric cultural jewel which they can expose to the eyes of all on a definite day, as agreed by treaty between the high contracting powers, Christianity and Judaism.

But the greatest error of this solution lies in its fallacious manner of thinking. Both solutions of the editors are based on the "realistic" (in the scholastic sense of the term) fallacy. They are based on the belief in the objective reality of the genera "Christianity" and "Judaism," to the point of forgetting that after all it is entirely a personal, individual problem. Yet it is only in remembering that the problem is of the latter kind that there can be any hope for a peaceful solution, a hope which I share.

For I believe there is a solution. I am not very pesimistic about the future, and I believe that time will crack the nut, if Christians will only have patience and give time time.

II.

There are in America four and a half million people—let us bear in mind that this means that there are so many distinct, atomic individuals—who are distinguished from the rest of the citizenry by their having a foreign culture and by their practicing an alien religion. Whether gentiles like them or not, does not really matter. They were freely admitted into this country; they are here, and to get rid of them would not be easy. Almost two millions of them live in New York city—and there they are. To expel them is impossible; east of New York, I am told, does not make good walking. These are the facts, and only the blind and the insane can disregard or evade them. But what is to be done about these facts?

These four and a half million people present a social problem: How can they be Americanized—and by Americanized I mean totally identified—economically, culturally, religiously—with their American environment? How can this summum bonum be brought about? I hereby grant that total identification is desirable, not because I am certain that it really is so culturally, though this too may well be, but as a concession to frail human nature. I agree with The Christian Century that "to imagine that the principle of tolerance can create a state of mind in which this tension will not exist, is a delusion. It expects too much of human nature." I therefore admit that assimilation is a "consummation devoutly to be wished for," and I only want to discuss how this consummation can best be brought about.

Approaching the problem in this commonsense manner it ceases to be a theoretical problem. It is essentially practical. Abstractly, not the slightest case can be made out against the right of a number of individuals to practice any religion they please. Western civilization is based on the many-sidedness-of-personality ideal. This means that every individual, so long as he does not come into overt conflict with the interests of society, has an inherent right to branch out in as many directions as he pleases. Te deny this right in the abstract is to undermine western civilization and to subscribe, ipso facto, to the static-Asiatic *Gleichschaltung ideal.* In the western tradition neither the state nor society has the right to probe into the innermost recess of the soul of the individual. We deny that the state has the right to decide which books we can read and which we cannot, unless it be in so social a matter as sex. But there we stop. Since Locke, furthermore, we have been championing the principle of indifference; that is, there are intensely personal matters with which neither society as a whole nor the state as the armed hand of society is allowed to interfere. They must observe strictly the principle of indifference. Religion, opinions, philosophies are such personal matters. From this point of view, if we are to carry on western civilization, if we are to remain true to the western tradition, neither the state nor society has the right to deny the Jews the right to practice any religion they please. Theoretically, then, no case can be made out against them.

But the problem is essentially practical. No amount of abstract acknowledgement of their rights will solve it. Granted that they have

the right to live a religiously autonomous life, the social problem still remains, namely, how can the undeniable social clashes between Jews and gentiles be eliminated? That is the practical problem, and it is on this practical plane that it must be solved.

III.

There are only two possible practical methods which society might adopt to solve this problem. The first method is an active demand for, and, if necessary, enforcement of, assimilation; the other is, to use a cliché, to allow nature to take her course. Let us look at the first possible practical method of dealing with our problem.

1. As a social necessity, in order to eliminate social friction, and thus produce a harmonious society, the state might be called upon "to do something about the Jews." There is really nothing to get frightened about in stating the case so bluntly. Society has a right to work for its own happiness, and if the happiness of the individual comes into conflict with that of society as a whole, it is just too bad—for the individual. It is useless to object to this possible solution with the theory that society does not have the right to interfere with so personal a matter as religion. Nor will the principle of indifference help us very much. The facts of the matter are that gentiles are not indifferent to Jews, and feel intensely that their presence is a disturbing element in the normal functioning of society. Our abstract principles are, therefore, immaterial. But there is a very practical question we must first answer before deciding on such a course: Will such a procedure solve the problem?

To this question we must reply in the negative. History proves that such a procedure has never been successful. And for an obvious reason—because action and reaction are always equal.

History tells us that whenever the Jews were persecuted, whenever an overt attempt at missionization has been made, it has ended in indubitable failure. Whenever such an attempt has been made, what happened was that the law of self-preservation was brought into active play. Experience teaches us that a great number of people find it easier to protect themselves than an individual would. Consequently, whenever gentile society embarked on an overt and active proselytization venture, the Jews, instead of coming out and accepting the inevitable, have withdrawn farther into their shells. Thus the ghetto originated. It was not the gentiles who forced the Jews into the ghetto. Originally it was a means of self-defense, indeed, the only means of defense they had. Only later did the gentile world insist on their remaining in the ghetto. What happened? For once the fantasy of a mechanic-gone-mad was a reality. During the middle ages, the international Jew, of Dearborn memory, was a fact. Since they lived compactly, segregated into a small area, they were able to build up and perfect their own autonomous communal organization, the *khilah*. By means of the khilah a Jewish merchant or capitalist could easily get in touch with another Jewish capitalist, regardless of distance. The Jewish traveler from Frankfurt was sure of finding hospitality in

Cordova. The khilah was an outcome of a real Jewish solidarity, but it was a solidarity which an openly hostile world forced upon them.

To force assimilation upon the Jew defeats its own end. Under compulsion they will withdraw farther and farther into their shell, and present a united front against the outside world. The so-far groundless fear of Mr. McAfee of a "Jewish solidarity" would under such a condition become a reality. The physical law of action-counteraction alone should lead us to expect such a result. But aside from all this, forcing assimilation upon the Jews will ipso facto make gentiles Jew-conscious, will poison their minds with a hatred against the Jews, so that they will not be willing to accept them. Thus, from whatever angle you look at this possible method, its self-defeating character becomes obvious. Observe! I do not—as I well might—object to this method from a theoretical standpoint; its immorality is disregarded; its horrible cruelty is stoically accepted as inevitable, but I examine it only on the practical plane, to the total exclusion of all ethical, theoretical and humanitarian considerations, and even on this rather brutish plane it proves impractical, self-defeating.

IV.

2. The other solution lies in allowing "nature to take her course," and we ourselves doing nothing beyond watching that she be allowed to follow her course. This is the only effectual solution for the Jewish problem.

That this laissez faire method contains the highest probability of an effectual solution can be demonstrated both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, the second cardinal point, it will be remembered, stated that the archetype "Jew" is a fiction; that there are only separate, distinct, independent individuals who happen to be born into Jewish families. The problem is wholly individualistic. And those individuals would be very grateful could they relieve themselves of their burden, without any noise. They have already gone far in this direction. They know precious little of the Jewish tradition, and practice even less. In spite of their having been born in orthodox homes (remember, Jewish immigration in America is mainly a twentieth century phenomenon), they have none the less advanced so far in the direction of assimilation. These assimilated Jews are more or less suffering, spiritually no less than physically. They *feel their odious cultural position* very profoundly. They know that spiritually they are a people without a country, ships without an anchor. At the moment they are standing at the very brink of the Rubicon—waiting to see whether they will be welcome on the other shore.

Should society prove willing to accept them, one by one they will cross the Rubicon, indeed, as they are now doing. The crossing takes the form of *intermarriage*, the only form possible. As yet, intermarriage is still the exception rather than the rule, but if we will bear in mind the fact that the majority of American Jews come from the "Pale," the swiftness of their emancipation will be appreciated. Today the movement is still comparatively slow, but it is gaining momentum.

Should American gentile society in the future retain the liberal attitude to the Jews which it has had in the past, within 100 years there will be no more Jews left in America. Of that I am certain.

The solution, then, lies in *patient waiting* and scrupulous watching, so that the hydra of anti-semitism does not raise its head. Should an anti-semitic movement gain ground in America, the present accelerating tendency toward assimilation will immediately be checked. Should gentile society become suddenly "Jew-conscious" and put forth an overt and active demand for assimilation, as sure as water freezes at 32° Fahrenheit, Jews will withdraw into their religious shell. The medieval ghetto with its khilah and international Jew would then be only a faint adumbration.

History supplies us with practical examples proving the truth of my contention. In tsarist Russia, where open attempts at conversion and de-Judaization were repeatedly tried, they all ended in complete fiascos. The Jews resisted heroically such planned inroads on them by strengthening their faith in the God of their fathers and, like their fathers, preferred death to enforced baptism. In Germany and Austria, however, where they were given complete liberty and freedom, they gradually threw off their protective shell and assimilation was well under way. In fact, in certain places as many as 40 per cent of Jewish marriages were mixed. On this basis one pre-war statistician estimated that by 1950 there would be no more Jews in Germany. But he knew nothing of the Führer!

In America the same thing is happening, as is, indeed, inevitable. The Jewish community is fast disintegrating. Mr. McAfee complained of "Jewish solidarity." But he lives in New York, where there are nearly two million Jews. Had he gone out to southern, middle western and western communities he would have seen how groundless is his worry. There, assimilation is striding with seven league boots.

All this leads me to scan the future optimistically. Soon there will be no "Jewish problem." Within a century American Jewry will be swallowed by the general gentile society—provided an anti-semitic plague does not infect the nation. Should demands be made upon the Jews to assimilate hastily, should attempts be made to force them into assimilation, as certainly as Roosevelt is President (and that is certain enough), just as certain can we be that in that case the process will end abruptly.

Our solution can be summarized in two words: Watchful waiting—watchful of the plague of anti-semitism, and readiness to quench it; patient waiting for the coming day of complete identification of the total Jewish population with the American civilization, an identification which is already going on, slowly but surely.—*Christian Century.*

The German Religious Situation

Discouraging Trend Accelerated

By the Rev. Henry Smith Leiper, D.D.

Executive Secretary of the American Section, Universal Christian Council for Life and Work

In my last statement made two weeks ago in these pages I indicated that the trend of things in Germany was distinctly discouraging. That trend has been accelerated in these recent days and at least two points stand out as being of particular moment.

In the first place, Reichsbishop Müller has appointed Heinrich Oberheid as "chief of staff," with the plain inference that Church administration is to be separated from the spiritual leadership of the Church. To the chief of staff the former responsibility is assigned while the Bishop elects to maintain the spiritual leadership. On the day of his appointment Herr Oberheid is credited with the remarkable prophecy that such changes would be made in theology as to bring into a unified organization the Roman and the Protestant groups in Germany. He did concede that it might take a year to arrange the details of the new type of administration—and presumably he has not ventured to risk his reputation as a staff leader on any prophecy concerning the length of time involved in removing difficulties created by the Reformation!

It becomes a little confusing to one who contemplates the place assigned to the leader in the actual government of the Church, to the Reichsbishop, to the Ministerial Cabinet, and now to the chief of staff. Of course, as a matter of fact, the cabinet has been virtually abolished, the constitution has been utterly disregarded, the *synods* have been *displaced* by *executive order* of the Reichsbishop and even such territorial division as that between Prussia and the rest of Germany has been overruled. His Holiness, the Pope of Rome, is infallible only when he speaks *ex cathedra*, but apparently the Nazi revolution in the Church in Germany implies that both Hitler and Müller are infallible at all times and now the latter has assigned to his new chief of staff the right of making decrees which will be of equal authority with those of the Reichsbishop himself. Thus infallibility broadens from precedent to precedent. As indicative of what this apparently may mean, one reads that Pastor Petersen of Lichterfelde has been suspended for praying in his church for "our misguided Reichsbishop."

The second of the two disturbing developments referred to above is the announcement that in the future candidates for theological training as future spiritual leaders of the Church are to be selected by the leaders of Hitler Youth. Readers of the news dispatches and of my articles in The Living Church would not need to be told of the disastrous effect that this regulation would be bound to have if carried through. I quoted Baldur von Schirach, leader of Hitler Youth, in the March 10th issue as saying, "The German race, not a religious creed, should be venerated." It is as if the most militant wing of the American Legion were to be entrusted with the selection of future candidates

for holy orders in the United States. And, to carry the figure further, one would need to assume that the oversight of theological faculties would be in the hands of the chief of staff under an army chaplain suddenly raised to primacy in the Church through a personal friendship with the President.

The appointment of the chief of staff for the Church and the announcement of the plan for selection of future theological candidates coincided almost exactly with another significant gesture of protest. The Associated Press is responsible for the report on March 8th from Berlin of a meeting at which 600 pastors and laymen declared openly their determination to stand together in *refusing obedience to Reichsbishop Müller*, approving resolutions declaring their adherence to the *Bible alone* and their *rejection* of the *swastika* as an emblem having no place beside the Cross of Christ. They constituted themselves a "free synod." What they will be able to accomplish is not clear, but their determination and purity of their intentions appear as one more encouraging sign on a dark horizon. It is also encouraging to know that apparently the peremptory orders of von Schirach respecting the dissolution of Catholic youth organizations have not been obeyed to the extent that one might expect, in view of the ruthless methods used to enforce such decrees in Nazi Germany. The Associated Press for March 16th quotes von Schirach as complaining of the "defiant stubbornness" hampering his campaign. He insists that "the entire nation shall pass a verdict on the Catholic youth leaders because of their loyalty to the Church rather than to the Hitler henchmen."

Taking another look into the gloom one sees the rising tide of the genuinely German religionists, as the followers of Rosenberg like to call themselves. Count Ernst Zu Reventlow, Professor Hauer of Tübingen, and Ernst Bergmann of Leipzig are standing for the creation of a definitely non-Christian religious body to stand for "truth and iron." The last named professor has produced a catechism of German religion with twenty-five theses which rejects Christianity *in toto*, and seeks redemption of the world from Christianity. "The heroic man does not wait for grace but creates his own moral salvation without grace. Neither does he wait for God's coming." And obviously he would not be interested in God's commands! Dr. Bergmann's thesis is that the German has his own religion which "wells up spontaneously from the racially determined way of looking at things, feeling, and thinking." These natural religionists are to seek "an antidote to the effeminate, *demoralizing ethics of Christianity*, which like some sugared poison has eaten into the hearts of men."

No wonder that Sir Philip Gibbs writing from Germany and reported in the North American Newspaper Alliance this month says, as he watches all this development and particularly the response of youth to it, "There is something terrible in it for neighboring nations, and there is something in it not belonging to European traditions. It is tribal. It is the worship of old gods. It is pagan in its origins and teaching. It is very dangerous. The young Nazis proclaim their desire for peace, and I believe them; but if their leaders called one day for

war they would go marching and singing to their sacrifice. Who can be sure of the minds directing and controlling this new force in Europe, this renaissance and young vigor of a great race marching toward the great unknown with old songs on their lips and old myths in their hearts?"

Another development of recent days which has been variously explained is the appointment of a bishop for the German Protestant *diaspora*, estimated at 10,000—probably by including all the Lutheran and Reformed people of German descent in the United States as well as in other non-German lands. I have on my desk official announcement from the Reichsbishop's office of the appointment of Dr. Theodore Heckel as Bishop for Ecumenical Relations. To him is to be assigned not only the spiritual welfare of the scattered German people above mentioned but likewise relationships with the Churches of other orders. Bishop Heckel, whom I know and who was present at the important ecumenical gatherings in Europe last summer, writes me of his recent visit to England for consultation with the Bishop of Chichester, chairman of the Universal Christian Council. It is too soon to say what policies the Bishop will follow in his novel and significant task. It is disturbing, however, to find him stressing the close connection between the Reich's Church and the Nazi State. The faith of the Church, he asserts, "has as its aim to synthesize revealed religion and the Nationalist Socialist *Weltanschauung*." According to him, the "Gospel turns not to the private and liberalistic individual but to the human being put within the order of God." *This human being*, he says however, must be of *the proper race*. In this respect he accepts the pernicious and outrageous racialism flowing from the springs of wisdom reputedly found by Housten Stuart Chamberlin and popularized by Adolf Hitler. It is obviously going to be extremely difficult, if not impossible, for the Christians in other Churches of the world to work in fellowship with the Church which so unreservedly commits itself through its leaders to such dangerous and devastating heresies.—*Living Church*.

Reinhold Niebuhr's Philosophy of Despair

Reflections on the End of an Era

By Reinhold Niebuhr. 302 pp. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.
A Religious Book Club Selection.

Reviewed by John Haynes Holmes*

Dr. Niebuhr is in his thinking a dual personality. This was made fairly evident in his "Moral Man and Immoral Society." It is made crystal clear in this latest book, a scattered series of essays on the crisis which faces the world today in "the disintegration of a social system and the task of building a new one." He himself confesses the tension within him when he defines his own position as that of "a

* Published here from New York Times to show the attitude of some Liberals towards Niebuhr. Ed.

more radical political orientation and more conservative religious convictions than are comprehended in the culture of our era."

On the one hand, Dr. Niebuhr is convinced of the doom of our existing order. Capitalism is breaking down not because of any mechanical defects which might be repaired, but because of a "sickness" which is "organic and constitutional." Our trouble is in "the very character of the social system" itself, which involves, in the nature of the case, "an unequal distribution of social power." In the inevitable transition, or rather revolution, in the social order which is now taking place, neither education nor religion can avail anything, since power is held by a class of property owners who are impervious to any appeal but that of self-interest. "No ruling obligarchy reveals any inclination to transfer any more power than is absolutely necessary to maintain the functions of its social system." If the people are to be free, threfore, they must seize power in a struggle which is certain to be ugly and violent. Nor may "conventionally nice people who live leisured lives at the price of other men's toil" pass "moral judgments" on such struggle. Not only do they "lack the physical power to execute their moral judgments," but they themselves are in reality responsible for barbarisms which are the consequence of their own oppression. Dr. Niebuhr thus moves far to the left in his attitude toward social change.

On the other hand, he shares none of the radical's hostility to religion. He contends that only religion can give us the ideals toward which we would move. These ideals may be illusions in the sense that the absolute love and disinterestedness which are the heart of religion may be impossible of realization. It was the virtue of orthodox Christianity that it saw the fundamental contradiction between what men could desire in the realm of moral purpose and what they could do in the realm of practical affairs, and presented "the assurance of grace" as the solution of the dilemma. Consciousness of sin, repentance, redemption, these gifts of religion can save us from "degenerating into bitter disillusionment" by creating within the soul "the faith through which men catch a glimpse of the reality of spirit." Dr. Niebuhr thus has no sympathy with the Marxian repudiation of religion. On the contrary, in his acceptance of religion as a "devotion to the absolute" he swings far, far to the right.

If there is any unity in Dr. Niebuhr's thought it is in his Calvinistic belief in the essential depravity of man, at least in society. It is on this point that he rejects "the liberal culture of modernity," which is opposed alike to violent revolutionary change and to traditional Christian faith. What turns him from liberalism, with a disgust which is almost an obsession, is its failure "to do justice to the doleful realities of human life." Liberalism persists in presenting an "erroneous estimate of human nature" in that it insists that human nature is good. It is in this sense guilty of inexcusable "blindness" and "optimism." Foolishly, year after year, it goes on thinking it can persuade men to be moral, all oblivious "to what degree the impulses of life are able to defy the canons of reason and the dictates of conscience." Dr. Nie-

buhr will have nothing of Channing's "marks of a divine origin and pledges of a celestial inheritance" in man. Therefore, he lapses into a thoroughgoing pessimism, in which he resolves the contradictions of his thought by a resort to the theological fantasies.

What we have in Dr. Niebuhr's book is one more contribution to the contemporary literature of despair, which is the counterpart of the world's collapse and chaos. We see this in the author's growing dogmatism of temper, his flat repudiation of idealism, his cynical contempt of the morally minded, his pessimistic abandonment of the world to its own unregenerate devices, and his desperate flight to the unrealities of theological illusion. His is a frank confession of defeat, and an equally frank demand for escape from defeat. His statement of his position is impressive, for Dr. Niebuhr's intellectual brilliancy remains unimpaired. But the moral significance of his collapse is appalling.

In these essays there is more confusion about the Nazarene and his teaching than I remember to have seen in any book for many years. But it is clear enough that Jesus' serene trust in human nature, his stern acclaim of the moral law, his utter reliance upon spiritual forces, his sunny optimism, his radiant passion, would all have seemed a little ridiculous to Niebuhr. The latter would not have opposed the Man of Galilee, but he certainly would have despised him. And with what relief he would have turned to the "cynical and realistic" Pilate as the man of the hour!

Mrs. Roosevelt Blacklisted

Speaking of Mrs. Roosevelt and the D. A. R. brings to mind a little book that one of our readers has sent us, and that we have been looking over with great interest. It is called "The Red Network," written and published by Elizabeth Dilling, and dedicated to "professional patriots," the members of the D. A. R. being listed first of all. It is described by its author as "a Who's Who and Handbook of Radicalism for Patriots," and it takes itself and its mission very, very seriously.

"The Red Network" is divided into three sections, the first consisting of short articles on the danger of Communism, Socialism, Pacifism, and the New Deal, all of which appear to be equally "red" to the eyes of the author; the second being a descriptive list of "red" organizations; and the third a list of some 1,300 dangerous radicals with their records briefly summarized. All three of these sections are very interesting, but it is the third to which we should like to direct attention particularly. Here we find a choice selection of "radicals" from A to Z, conveniently listed for quick reference in case one of them happens to turn up on the local lecture platform. And even a casual glance is enough to show that, if politics makes strange bedfellows, radicalism makes downright weird ones.

First of all, we find of course the acknowledged Communist leaders —Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin, and, in this country, Foster (for the directory, though primarily concerned with this country and with living men

and women, is not exclusively devoted to them). Then we have the Socialist leaders—Macdonald, Victor Berger, Norman Thomas, and so on. And of course the LaFollettes, Senator Borah, and other irregular members of both houses of Congress. Then we come to the New Dealers, and especially the Brain Trust—Wallace, Tugwell, and other note-Wirt-y characters. (Curiously enough, Brother Moley is not listed.)

When we got to this point in our examination of this Red List, we began to wonder whether or not the Arch-Radical himself was listed, and we hastily paged through to the "R" section. Sure enough, here we have it: "Roosevelt." But looking more closely, we find it isn't the President, but Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt that is listed. Ah, *now* we know why the D. A. R.'s didn't applaud more vigorously. Some of them had probably been reading "The Red Network," and knew that Mrs. Roosevelt was one of Stalin's fellow Communists—doubtless in the pay of Moscow!

If anyone thinks that the Episcopal Church is a pure white pillar of capitalism and respectability, untainted by any spot of color, "The Red Network" will speedily disillusion him. In addition to such notable lay churchmen as Secretary Wallace and Mrs. Roosevelt, there is quite a contingent of our clergy. Here are a few of them: Bernard Iddings Bell, A. L. Byron-Curtiss, Bishop Paul Jones, Charles N. Lathrop (of blessed memory), John Howard Melish, Bishop Parsons of California, Guy Emery Shipler of *The Churchman* and William B. Spofford of *The Witness*. (*The Living Church* has escaped condemnation.)

Such respectable individuals as the Insulls, Ivar Kreuger and Sir Basil Zaharoff are not listed in "The Red Network." They may have caused untold misery and suffering, but they never for a moment questioned the doctrines of rugged individualism, and so there is no need to warn the public about them.

The author prefaces her list of radicals with this sentence: "Mention in this Who's Who will be regarded by those who are proud of their affiliations as a badge of honor, by those ashamed of them as a black list." Most of the rest of us will realize that there is a good deal of difference between Dr. Bernard Iddings Bell and Messrs. Lenin and Trotsky, and that Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt isn't the Big Bad Wolf in disguise.—*The Living Church*.

A Study of Names

Dr. W. D. Happel

The new Church to be organized at Cleveland in June is to be called "The Evangelical and Reformed Church." We do not believe that the name in this form is entirely satisfactory to any one. It was no doubt thought by the Commission that it was the best that could be done under the circumstances. One objection to the name is that it is not euphonious. Another is that it is cumbersome. The age in which we live has little patience with unwieldy names. The chief objection is that *the conjunction is suggestive of disunion rather than union*. We believe that a slight change in the proposed name would make a great

improvement. A study of names may be helpful in our effort to find a more satisfactory name for the new Church.

The Diet of Spires which met in 1529 proclaimed an edict which forbade the progress of the Reformation in the states of Germany which had not accepted it. This decree brought forth a protest from the Elector of Saxony and several other princes, together with fourteen cities. This protest gave rise to the name Protestant. It was a name given by the enemies of the Reformation as the name Christian had been given to the disciples of Jesus and as the name Methodist was given to the followers of Wesley. The adherents of the Reformation accepted this name. The name, however, is negative. The Reformation Church was more than a protest against the decree of the Diet of Spires, and even more than a protest against certain beliefs and practices of the Roman Church. It was an unearthing of the Gospel of Jesus as expressed in John 3: 16 and as expressed by Paul in Ephesians 2: 8: "By grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, that no man should glory." The Reformation Church proclaimed this Evangel and its proper name was the Evangelical Church, the Church based on the Scriptures, the Gospel, the Evangel of Jesus.

The name "Evangelical" is positive and illuminating. It was not long, however, until it was evident that the Evangelical movement was of two types, that of Luther and that of Zwingli. It became necessary, therefore, to modify the name Evangelical. One division became known as the Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the other as the Evangelical Reformed Church. One was the Evangelical Church of the Lutheran type, and the other the Evangelical Church of the Reformed type. A strange thing happened. The two Churches were called by the people not by their real name, Evangelical, but by the modifiers, Lutheran and Reformed. They were popularly known as the Lutheran Church and the Reformed Church. In fact, at a later date the name Evangelical was dropped by the Reformed branch in this country in its official name, which is no longer called the Evangelical Reformed Church, but simply the Reformed Church in the United States. In 1817, in commemoration of the three hundredth anniversary of the Reformation, the King of Prussia united the two Churches. The union movement spread throughout Germany, although not all Lutheran and Reformed Churches entered the union. The modifiers, Lutheran and Reformed, were dropped, and the Reformation name, Evangelical, was resumed. The Evangelical Synod of North America is the Evangelical Church of Germany in this country.

The meaning of the name "Evangelical and Reformed Church" then would be the Evangelical Church (the union of the Lutheran and Reformed Church) and the Evangelical Reformed Church (the Evangelical Church of the Reformed type.) Were it not for the fact that there is another Evangelical Church in this country, the Church founded by Jacob Albright, the name Evangelical Church would be fine, this having been the real name of the Reformation Church, as we have seen. But because of this the name would be confusing, espe-

cially in the eastern part of our country. The next best thing to do would be to call the new Church the Evangelical Reformed Church; but this might not be acceptable to the Evangelical Synod, inasmuch as this would be the original name of the Reformed Church. The best thing that remains to be done is *to retain the names of both bodies to the union and unite them by means of the hyphen.* The name would be "The Evangelical-Reformed Church." This would be a decided improvement on "The Evangelical and Reformed Church." The hyphen unites as the word "and" does not. If in England George Smith marries Mary Jones, he does not call himself George Jones and Smith, but George Jones-Smith. We do not speak of a person born in Germany and naturalized in this country as a German and an American, but as German-American. "And" in both these cases would be suggestive of a duality. The hyphen is suggestive of unity.

Let it not be The Evangelical and Reformed Church, but the Evangelical-Reformed Church. This is fair to both parties. It is more euphonious, less awkward, and above all, it is suggestive of organic union. And let this name be agreed on before the Constitution is made and adopted and published.

Lebanon, Pa. *Reformed Church Messenger.*

Christian Education in the Evangelical Synod

Traditionally, the Evangelical Synod has taken a lively interest in education. When our fathers immigrated into the frontier sections of the middle west and set up their homes there, they quickly organized themselves into congregations for the purpose of establishing public worship and providing schools for their children. In addition to erecting a Church auditorium they also built a school house. Sometimes the pastor was the teacher, but in many instances they employed men who had been especially trained for the position as teacher and organist, and these men occupied an honored and respected place in the councils of the Church. Early in the history of the denomination Elmhurst College was founded partly for the purpose of giving candidates for the ministry their preliminary training but also for the purpose of training parochial school teachers.

Gradually as the systems of public schools became well established, our Churches yielded to the American plan whereby education in the secular subjects is made the responsibility of the State, while education in religion is reserved as the special prerogative of the Church. But as the "Gemeindeschule" was abandoned, many of our Churches did not immediately sense the fact that they were not thereby relinquishing their total responsibility for the Christian nurture of their boys and girls. Only gradually has a new educational consciousness been developing. Practically every congregation now has its Sunday Church School with a total enrollment for the denomination of 215,000. Participation in Daily Vacation Bible Schools has been growing with leaps and bounds. More and more Churches are providing adequate building facilities for their educational programs. Everywhere pastors are recognizing the strategic importance of confirmation instruction

and are endeavoring to improve its progress. Provision is being made in the Church School for the education of adults as well as children, and the entire program of the Church is being planned more and more in the light of its educational implications.

The Sunday School received its first official recognition by the General Conference of the Synod in 1892. Since 1894 there has been a synodical committee or board entrusted with the leadership of this important work. In 1915 the first executive secretary was employed and a central Sunday School office established. In the following year the first National Sunday School Convention was held in Cleveland, Ohio, with a registered attendance of over 1,300. Four other national conventions have taken place since that date.

The Church School of today is largely in the hands of volunteer leaders and the Church faces no greater task than that of providing opportunities for continued training for these leaders. To meet that challenge, the Board of Religious Education has since 1915 been operating a series of ten-day summer training schools. Beginning with a single school meeting on the campus of Elmhurst College at Elmhurst, Illinois, there are now seven such schools meeting each year in various parts of the country. Over 5,000 different people have shared the experiences of an E. L. T. S. (Evangelical Leadership Training School) during the past 19 years, and no other single institution of the Church has made a more beneficial impression upon the life and work of the local congregation than have these schools. A series of boys' and girls' camps are also held each summer under the auspices of the Board. In addition, leadership training courses are given in local Church and community school classes. Last year a total of 1,621 credits were earned by Evangelical students in such classes.

The editorial department of the Board is responsible for the publication of 21 distinct periodicals. These include lesson materials, graded story papers and the official workers' magazine of the Board, called the *Light Bearer*. Numerous pamphlets and other materials are issued by the central office as needed. A Service Library containing copies of all the important and useful books in religious education is available for use by all Church School workers without charge except for the return postage on books borrowed. The services of members of the staff are also at the disposal of all Church School workers. In these various ways the Board of Religious Education of the Evangelical Synod is striving to keep alive the educational heritage of our Church and to rearticulate against the changing background of American life the potent educational genius of Protestantism.

Theodore C. Braun,

in the "Reformed Church Messenger."

Book Review

(When ordering books, please mentions this Magazine.)
NOTE—*Reviews, when not signed, are by the Editor.*

Preachers Present Arms, by *Ray H. Abrams,* Ph. D., Department of Sociology, the University of Pennsylvania. Round Table Press, Inc. New York, 1933. 297 pages, $2.50.

It is a safe guess to venture the statement that many preachers, some of them occupying very prominent places in American Protestantism, would wish this book had never been written. It cannot be pleasant for them to have it documented here to what extent they had succumbed to the war-time hysteria. Perhaps to some of them it might be a reminder to probe their hearts whether their repentance for past sins was commensurate with their offence.

Those of us who by reason of their ancestry remained unaffected by the war-psychosis, have the satisfaction to know that later events showed they were right in their resistance to propaganda. Still, the conduct of the American ministers during the war was so extreme in its hatred of the enemy and its distortion of Christian principles that one regards their present avowals never to bless war again with very grave doubts. The author of the book deserves great credit for the thoroughness with which he has done his work. For six years he had been collecting the evidence, and although he furnishes a devastating indictment against the clergy it cannot be said that he writes with a hostile spirit.

When Europe began the Great War in 1914, America was not at once ready to join in. But it was obvious enough that complete neutrality (even in thought—Wilson) could not be long maintained. English propaganda at once got busy on the task of winning the Americans over to the allied cause and they were naturally better able to engage the affections of the people for the "mother country" than the German propagandists. A powerful movement for "preparedness" set in and in this attempt to get ready for war the ministers of English descent gave ready support. President Wilson was (according to House), already before his second presidential campaign, resolved to throw in his lot with the Allies although this campaign was waged under the slogan, "He kept us out of the War."

When war had been declared the country as a whole was at once infected with the war fever and the churches were one of the chief agencies to inspire the people with warlike ardor and to keep up their morale. The ministers gave Mr. Wilson their enthusiastic cooperation in proving that this war was a *holy* war. Joseph F. Newton, Episcopalian, said: "Think it all through, and at bottom, the war is religious. If our enemies are right, our religion is wrong, our faith a fiction, our philosophy false—yes, justice a dream, and righteousness a delusion.

If God is a reality and the order of the world is moral, our enemies are wrong! The very stars in their courses are against them." Frank Mason North, president of the Federal Council, told the churches that the stir of the breath of God was upon the common people of the world. The war for righteousness would be won! let the Church do her part. Lynn Harold Hough, professor at Garrett Biblical Institute then, wrote a book entitled "The Clean Sword." In this he proved that the Bible was not pacifist literature, that the use of the sword for high ideals, such as the Allies exemplified, was a duty. Harold Bell Wright, of the Disciples' Communion, stated it succinctly: "The sword of America is the sword of Jesus." Geo. W. Downs, a Methodist minister of a Pittsburgh church, told the people his blood boiled when he heard men say their religion forbade them the killing of men with guns and bayonets. If he had been there he would have driven his bayonet into the throat or the eye or the stomach of the Huns without the slightest hesitation and his conscience would not have bothered him in the least. A. C. Dieffenbach (Unitarian) said "if Jesus was in the battles he (Jesus) would take bayonet and grenade and bomb and rifle and do the work of deadliness against that which was the most deadly enemy of his father's kingdom in a thousand years." "That," he concluded, "was the inexorable truth about Jesus Christ and this war; and we rejoice to say it." According to Charles A. Eaton, Baptist minister of Cleveland, "this war was the greatest blessing that had ever fallen on mankind since the German Reformation."

The insane hatred against the "Huns" deprived the clergy of all self-control and all humanity. To Dr. Cadman the Kaiser was a "devil incarnate." The worst offender of all was Dr. Hillis of Brooklyn. He had lost caste with his people through shady financial manipulations and used the war to rehabilitate himself with them. He went to Belgium and came back with the most horrible "atrocity stories." With them he went through the country and spoke at four hundred different places, everywhere fanning the passions of the people with his hellish tales, 99% of which were just inventions pure and simple. He achieved a high degree of popularity by this "wartime service." Bishop W. A. Quayle wrote in the Northwestern Christian Advocate: "Germany has ravished the women of Belgium, Serbia, Roumania, Poland, Armenia. She has poisoned wells, crucified inhabitants and soldiers, burned people in their homes, and this by system. She has denatured men and boys, has wantonly defaced the living and the dying and the dead. An eye-witness tells of seeing women dead at a table with their tongues nailed to the table and left to die. . . . To climax her horrid crimes Germany has inflicted compulsory polygamy on the virgins of its own lands." One could go on indefinitely and quote examples showing that the nation was "drunk with hate" and that the ministers were the ones who administered to the people the diabolical drugs.

The war came to an end with the defeat of the Germans. The Christian Century thanked God because "he had aroused the conscience of the world against our enemies and helped preserve the most wonderful morale in our soldiers." The editor believed in a thorough

chastisement of Germany so that she would never forget her lesson, for Germany was a criminal and had placed herself outside the pale of respectable citizenship in the social order of the world. He insisted: "we do not hate the cannibal, cruel and vicious though he is." Such was the sentiment of the American Church. No wonder the peace treaties became the horrid travesties on the terms that Wilson had prated about. "The Treaty of Versailles," the author says, "was exactly the type of treaty for which the churches had been clamoring in the months prior to and following the day of the Armistice."

In the concluding chapter the writer tries to explain why the clergy so entirely lost its balance and denied the spirit and gospel of their Master. The first cause, he says, was the intimate connection between religion and capitalism. Institutionalized religion in the West is tied up with the prevailing economic order. The churches in a crisis such as in 1917 cannot disentangle themselves from the very fabric of society of which they are a part. Then, Christianity has been becoming increasingly nationalistic. The god of Nationalism is more powerful in his ability to command obedience and devotion than is Jehovah himself. The flag of the country seems to be a more potent symbol than the cross. Christianity has become an adjunct to Nationalism. The members of the cloth and their fellows were susceptible to war psychology and crowd-thinking in the same manner as were the other citizens. "As a class they shared the common characteristics of the crowd mind, suffered from all its obsessions, delusions, phobias, megalomania and paranoia, persecuted and hated with the others. Christians did not in general demonstrate any different code of ethics or type of behavior from the unbelievers."

The final question is, naturally, what will the clergy do in the event of another war? Of course, since the World War there has been a good deal of searching of hearts. Thousands of ministers have vowed they will never bless war again. But any one who has lived through 1914-18, and further; any one who has refreshed the memory of those years again by the reading of this book, will be unable to meet the future in this respect with any great confidence. The writer reminds us of the latest developments in connection with the rise of Hitler and the American reaction to it. Hitler has taken the place of the Kaiser in the American mind. "We want Hitler with a rope around his neck!", so sang thousands. The same unreasoning condemnation, the same fanatical hysteria, the same unwillingness to understand the situation.

The author finds it difficult to believe that the churches have become immune to hatred and could not again engage in a "holy war." Reviewer agrees with the writer in this respect; but if the time of trial should come again the writer of this book would have the satisfaction of knowing that he had shown the clergy the horrid things propaganda did in 1914-1918. If in spite of that they would succumb again, the historian could not be blamed. It would only prove that the cynic is right in saying that men will never learn from the blunders of their past.

Some Experiments in Living, by *Peter Ainslee.* Association Press, 1933, New York. 190 pages.

After reading only one or two chapters on his "Experiments in Living," one comes to the conviction that Peter Ainslee, the author, is a most remarkable man. Take the chapter on "Church Planting," which tells us with what attitude he entered into the active ministry. He had been thrilled by reading the scriptural sentence: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, said the Lord of hosts." He determined to put this verse to the test. Was it possible to be guided by spiritual consideration only and expect results in a world like ours? He took a church of less than a hundred members, in a poor district of Philadelphia, with apparently no future, as an experiment in the practicability of Scripture promises. For years the outcome seemed doubtful; at one time the church board itself suggested to him to give up the struggle. He received invitations from large and desirable fields. Still he kept on, willing to give the Lord, if necessary, twenty-twenty-five years for an adequate application of divine principles to his particular situation. The experiment was successful throughout, the church became large in members and vigorous along active lines. Mission churches were started from this one parish. Even the failure of trusted helpers and the machination of unscrupulous enemies could not smash the "laboratory test of the Spirit" to pieces. The finances for building purposes were supplied in the most unusual way. The work of the Spirit was thoroughly and without a mistake vindicated.

Or take the chapter "An Experiment against War," perhaps the most impressive of the eight experimental lines covered in the book. Ainslee was from the beginning an ardent peace advocate. He had learned from Tolstoi, the great Russian protagonist of the peace cause, and from his own studies and observations in connection with Grand Army experiences and the wars of the United States with foreign powers. When the Spanish American War came he spoke against it on all occasions. But how did he keep this up, so we ask, when the World War broke out? Did he not then capitulate as 99% of the American clergy were to do so shamefully? By no means. He made a tour across the country denouncing war as a method for adjusting international disputes. After the United States entered the war, every Sunday until the armistice, he prayed in his pulpit for the nations involved, calling each nation by name and supplicating God to have mercy upon them in their madness and folly. This was shocking to his congregation. And throughout the country he was denounced as a pro-German. But he could not be swerved from the path his conscience and conviction marked out for him. In vivid style he goes on in this chapter to castigate the folly, the wickedness, the hypocrisy, the hatred that war engenders. How public opinion has veered around to his position, how heroic his record compared with the ministerial war-madness as described in the recent book, "Preachers Present Arms!" (by Abrams).

There are chapters on "Inter-racial Friendship" (with Jews and Negroes), on "Social Justice," on "Christian Unity," on "Keeping Mar-

ried People Married" and on Experiments in "Theology." Ainslee as a young man was rather narrow in his treatment of the Bible, but he came to learn that life was more important than doctrine and the Spirit more than the letter. He calls denominationalism the "Scandal of Christianity" and has not much faith in denominational papers.

Of course, we cannot go with Ainslee in all respects and he is the last to demand or expect it. But one cannot read this book without admiring the author's strength of character and the soundness of his spiritual nature. With him Christianity is a matter providing the solution of all problems if it is only tested honestly and consistently. His convictions and attitudes are firmly rooted in the soil of experience and are buttressed with such good reasons that they have an almost irresistible appeal. The perusal of this book will act as a tonic and introduce the reader to a man equally good and strong in his head and in his heart. We all are interested in the issues with which the writer deals. But he has done more; he has for many years been experimenting with them seriously and with a large measure of success.

The Oxford Group Movement (Buchmanism). An Investigation and a Criticism by *G. C. Gast*, D.D. The Lutheran Book Concern, Columbus, Ohio, 1934. 29 pages, 40 cts.

This pamphlet undertakes a critical evaluation of "Buchmanism," or, to use the name coined by its adherents, of "The First Century Christian Fellowship." We first receive an interesting account of the founder's life and work. Buchman was trained as a Lutheran minister. He experienced a kind of "Second Blessing", (to adopt a Methodist term) under the preaching of a woman of the Pentecostal Cult in England. After that he was a changed man and began to bear witness of what God had done for him. Owing to his magnetic personality and the peculiar conversion technique he worked out, he was remarkably successful. His influence spread to many countries. Essential features of this technique are the idea of "sharing" and of "divine guidance." The sharing consists in confessing one's sins before others, so as to make them ready to confess their own sins and seek forgiveness. The guidance is the direction which the Christian gets from the Holy Spirit in the "Quiet Hour." Buchman has worked especially among the wealthier class of people and among college students. The writer says, the Buchmanite receives forgiveness of sin not by grace but through a surrender of the will. He doesn't seem to have any deep sense of sin; there is too much banter in their house parties, and not much humility. The sharing of sin leads to morbid confessions of sexual irregularities. Guidance is received where the simple use of intelligence and experience would be fully sufficient. One woman was led by "guidance" to a certain store, where she bought a one thousand dollar fur coat for three hundred dollars! A three year old child received "guidance" to eat more porridge in the morning. The "changed lives" the Groupers speak so much of are no sure sign: all cults and religions claim the same for their disciples.

The "plan of salvation" is wholly ignored; the Bible is seldom used. That salvation comes through the blood of Jesus is not stressed. The Groupers are indifferent as to Christian doctrines. Whether a man is a believer in Christian Science, in Unitarianism or some other cult is treated with indifference.

Buchmanism, this is the writer's final verdict, is fundamentally unwholesome and anti-scriptural and positively dangerous to the soul. It has a few good features, like its quiet hour, its desire to witness and its practice of Christian fellowship. There is to be found in it a needle of truth in a haystack of error. They have zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. They establish their own righteousness, but have not submitted to the righteousness of God.

The writer is very severe on the Buchmanites. Reviewer classes Buchmanism with other revival movements. They supply something which the Church failed to furnish. They are apt to be one-sided, but in time they will become more balanced. In the meantime, be glad for every sinning and seeking man they bring into a better life.

The Message of Israel. The Chalmers Lectures 1931 by *John Edgar McFadyen*, Professor of Old Testament Language, Literature and Theology, Trinity College, Glasgow. Second Edition, Funk and Wagnalls Co. Publishers, 354-360 Fourth Ave., New York. 304 pages, $2.00.

It would be hard to find a book that shows either a greater knowledge of the Old Testament or a fuller appreciation of its worth and beauty. In the first chapter already, which deals with some "permanent values" of the Old Testament, the author's familiarity with the subject manifests itself. While he likes to point out its literary beauty he dwells more on its moral and religious excellence. The Old Testament is thoroughly nationalistic in so far as it is interested in Israel, its history, its fate, its great men, primarily. But at the same time we owe to it the vision that the nation is a servant of the Most High. Its supreme message is its sense of, and faith in God, the Creator and Ruler, who reveals his majesty and holiness as well as his mercy and love. This revelation is given in forms which speak to the imagination. There is no abstract philosophy in its conception of God. God is a person and he deals with persons. The men who show forth his will and ways are the prophets; they are God's chosen instruments. God speaks to them and when they speak they say: "thus says the Lord."

The Lord speaks in history, he controls historical forces to ends of his own. He is present all the time among the movements of history. Force and wrong must one day abdicate in favor of justice, humanity and religion.

The chapter entitled the Bible in Education, is especially worthy of notice. Education, the author says, is the transmission of life to the living through the living. Religion must be caught through the contact with one who has it. But a Bible teacher needs more than piety and good intention. He must be acquainted with the Bible and know how to teach it.

The Bible deals with the most vital things in the simplest way. It is other-worldly in the best sense and yet in direct contact with the reality of experience.

The writer devotes quite a good deal of his space to the question, how are we going to teach those parts of the Old Testament which either in morals or in their religious conceptions are sub-Christian. He is very frank on this subject. When Elijah slays four hundred prophets of Baal after that contest on Mount Carmel, or Samuel hews King Agag to pieces, or the Israelites put men, women and children to the sword, in the conquest of Canaan, we, of course, cannot but feel the moral limitations of these men and acts.

But how are we to teach the miracle stories of the Old Testament if we ourselves find it difficult to believe in them, or those passages which manifestly are only pictorial representations of otherwise simple facts? Such as the walking of God in the garden in the cool of the day, or Joshua's prayer to stay the sun in its course, or the heavenly sons marrying the daughters of man? Some of these things, the author says, do not have to be taught at all. Others, when we are dealing with small children, are to be left in their miraculous garbs. It would be wrong and foolish to refuse to enter fully into the wonder world of the child. But there comes a time when the children are ready for the gradual weaning from the wonderland into history. It is not easy always to treat such matters so as to combine the modern critical attitude and reverence for the Bible text. Still we agree with Professor Robertson Smith when he said, "Of this I am sure, that the Bible does speak to the heart of man in words that can only come from God: no historical research can deprive me of this conviction, or make less precious the divine utterances that speak straight to the heart."

The prophets are the most important men in the Old Testament dispensation. They are not merely social reformers. Their solution of the social problem is the religious solution. To know God was to be interested in moral welfare. The prophet's task was to stir the popular conscience. His voice was uplifted in the service of justice and mercy, against intemperance, immorality, dishonesty and unspirituality. "Seek me, and not Bethel," says one of them, which means, not rituals and sacrifices will heal the wounds of the nation. No, rather "let justice roll on like water and righteousness as a perennial stream." The way of morality inspired by religion, of justice rooted in the fear of God, is the right way. Thus only can reform be successful and reconstruction be on a safe and enduring basis.

In a chapter, "The Prophet and the Priest," the writer comments on the fact that the prophets apparently have no use for the sacrificial system that loomed so large in the eyes and habits of the people. Of course the prophets who object to sacrifices and ritual are the pre-exilic. After the exile, under Malachi, Haggai, and already under Ezekiel, the priestly element very decidedly comes to the front again. But Isaiah, Hosea, Amos, Jeremiah are agreed that God seeks obedience, not sacrifice. According to them the acid test of religion is its power to moralize the social relations of men; or, as Micah expressed it, what

is "required of man is that he do justly, love mercy and walk humbly before his God." Are the prophets protesting against ritual per se or only against making ritual do service for character and right conduct? It is hardly true, says the writer, that they were against the cult altogether; they condemned the sacrificial part of it. Jeremiah says, "did God in the days when he led you out of Egypt give any commandments regarding burnt-offerings?" The answer is, naturally, no; and thereby the prophet rejects that whole sacrificial system which in our Bibles fills the books of Leviticus, Numbers, Chronicles and has so much influenced other parts of the Old Testament. The prophets refused to believe that it was ordained of God. This is in tune with the position that Jesus took and the New Testament writers, with the exception of the letters to the Hebrews. In their quotations from the Old Testament they always draw on the prophetic heritage of Israel, never on the priestly.

In one of the closing chapters, "The World-Riddle," the contributions the Old Testament makes to a proper world view are discussed. Is it vain to serve God? Is it better to die than to live, and still better never to have been born? Is goodness rewarded by prosperity and wickedness punished by disaster? Such are some of the questions asked here. The author shows how they are handled by biblical writers, in the psalms, the book of Job and in the Wisdom books. Some show an undisturbed faith, some battle with doubt. No altogether satisfactory solution is found. But to hold fast the faith in a loving, though inscrutable God is the highest counsel these books supply. "The Proberbs know no problem; Ecclesiastes knows no solution." Job wrestles most with the difficulty and achieves the most satisfactory result.

In these latter books of the Old Testament the writer seems to be especially interested and the discussion is most fruitful. But in our opinion the whole volume will prove of helpful, interesting and well considered service to all who endeavor to become better acquainted with the real spirit of the Old Testament.

The World of Jesus. A Survey of the Background of the Gospels by *Henry Kendale Booth*. Chas. Scribner's Sons, New York, 1933. 242 pages.

The narrative of Jesus' life is told in the gospels with commendable simplicity but also with great restraint. Modern scholarship has gathered together a great mass of interesting facts regarding the dim background of the life of Jesus. These make it possible to answer the question as to what sort of a world the eyes of Jesus looked upon; what influences and forces about him had some part in determining the course of his life and teachings. The light of research has in recent years been turned on the geography, history, ethnology, politics, social life and customs, literature and religion of Palestine in Jesus' day, with the result of bringing into bold relief the world in which Jesus lived and taught. Out of this wealth of material, scattered through many volumes, it is the purpose of this book to pick out the main

elements and present them in popular form, in order to give the student of the gospels a vivid and realistic picture of the world of Jesus as he saw it.

Reviewer is going to quote from the great abundance and variety of historic facts the author has accumulated, without paying strict regard to the framework in which he has assigned a place to them.

The "silent centuries," i. e., the four hundred years following Malachi, have been the object of close study in the last quarter century, and much light has been thrown from them upon various features of Jesus' teaching. The books belonging in this connection are products of Hellenistic literature, such as Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, Testaments of the Patriarchs, Second Esdras and the Book of Enoch. Jewish scholars have on the basis of such researches made the bold claim that Jesus drew largely from contemporaneous literature, that he was not such a wonderful original as the Christian world thought. Christians have rejected such strictures with indignation. However, a calm examination of the sources show that Jesus indeed borrowed much of his ethical thought or religious phraseology from Jewish literature. The author frankly acknowledges such borrowing. From the quotations he offers, especially from the book of Enoch, it cannot be denied that Jesus' words often are almost identical with sayings in that book. But, as the writer says, Jesus poured himself into his teachings, he became the incarnation of his ideals, and his close relation to his pupils was the dynamic whereby he made his influence effective. His teaching was practical, concrete, imaginative and positive.

Of all pagan environments, the Persian epoch was for Israel the most far-reaching. The Israelites adopted from them the religious dualism (compare the Persian Ahura Mazda, God of light, and Ahriman, God of darkness—Satan); their angelology, the teachings about the world of the dead and the resurrection.

That Jesus like all the Jews of his time and before his time, was affected by the apocalyptic world view, the author cannot but admit, but he is opposed to A. Schweitzer who makes Jesus an out and out apocalypticist. He says Jesus did not believe in a cataclysmic coming of the Kingdom of God but in a gradual leavening of the human material, culminating in a rejuvenated Christian society: a process rather than an event. We think that the prevailing trend of scholarly opinion today agrees rather with Schweitzer than with the author.

The whole idea underlying the book, that environment, history, the spirit of the times, in one word the whole background that Jesus spoke from influenced his development and the form of his teaching, is evidently correct. There was a time when we thought all he said was a product of divine revelation. I remember well when years ago I read in "The Minor Prophets," by Geo. A. Smith, that the God idea of the prophets grew more comprehensive as they came in touch with the nations of the world, that I was somewhat shocked by this statement. I had counted on divine revelation enlarging the prophets' religious conceptions. Today we believe that this is a case not of "either—or," but of "both—and." Experience and divine guidance were

both operative. This applies to Jesus himself. Jesus, of course, was greater than Moses and Elijah, and Amos and Isaiah; and much greater than the Hellenistic writers. Not because he was a religious "genius," as the author seems to think, but he was the human incarnation of God.

With great fulness and with an unusual knowledge of the pertinent literature, also at times with creative imagination, the writer pursues his task of putting us in the world of Jesus. Nazareth where he grew up; Capernaum, his *own* city during his ministry; the Lake of Galilee that was so dear to him; and finally Jerusalem, once the city of God but now rejecting its Messiah—all these places are skilfully and impressively made to live before us.

The final catastrophe receives only brief treatment. The Jews had Jesus crucified because he wanted to be a spiritual king while they desired a worldly one. The author tells us *why* the Jews put him out of the way. To tell us what Christ's crucifixion was to God—and to us, he did not consider his task in this book. A few closing words tending in that direction reviewer would have welcomed. Still, the book is so full, so informative, so adequate in all ways that its title seems to call for, that we cannot but express our admiration to the man who wrote it.

The Plain Man Seeks for God, by *Henry P. Van Dusen* (Associate Professor of Systematic Theology and the Philosophy of Religion), Union Theological Seminary, New York City. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1933. 213 pages, $2.00.

This book examines the ordinary layman's working beliefs, the convictions which actually influence his life. It aims to discover the reasons for the inadequacy of such convictions and to present certain constructive suggestions toward a more adequate faith. In our opinion, therefore, the title chosen for the volume ought not to be "The Plain Man Seeking for God," but "Helping the Plain Man to Find God."

The author shows very convincingly that the ordinary man's religious convictions are today neither clear nor very helpful. Religion does not occupy the place any more it had in the life of our forefathers. If we go back to the time of our grandfathers we realize that their religious faith was rather undisturbed by doubts. They may themselves have had convictions that were passed on to them by their elders. Their faith may not have been as lively as that of the generation that was the immediate result of the age of religious revival, still, its roots were deep and strong and to them without question religion was the most important thing in human life. When the next generation came upon the scene, naturally much of the vigor of previous times had been lost. They lived on the religious capital of their progenitors, and close observers could already see that the climate was changing. This change has assumed a definite shape in the younger generation of our day.

Their approach to religion is more from without. It is wholly foreign to the familiar, workaday living. Religion, they realize, was

reputed to have a profound meaning, but youth has never been introduced to its Holy of Holies. "It meant an awful lot to dad, or granddad," the younger people say, but to them it has become "an elective in the university of life." Scientific thought has made belief in God vague, not positive, concrete and constant. Modern Humanism represents the extreme development of this eclipse of religion. It tries to build its kind of religion through the glorification of man and indifference to the cosmos. Its sway will probably not last long, but it accentuates the sorry state contemporary religion has fallen into even among those who are not materialists. God is admitted to the precincts of convictions rather tentatively and after rigorous scrutiny. Religious Liberalism has preached what may be termed a "minimum interpretation" of religion (compare Wieman's attempt to present a minimum conception of God: "a process of integration of personality," or similar vague and unsatisfactory formulas). Religion is explained by Liberals to be a way of life, or a philosophy of life. It leads to a tentative religious postulate of the probable existence of God. Its God is not much better than the God of the Deists. There is only that difference that the God of the Deists stands aside after creating the world, leaving it to the domination of natural law. The God of Liberalism "jumps aboard" his world after it is made, sharing with it its precarious career. God is immanent in every human soul, decrees Liberalism, but we are less sure of the activity of God than we are of our nearest neighbor.

Who is fault of this decay of live religion, this uncertainty as to an ultimate Reality, this rudderless drifting of humanity on the ocean of life? asks the author in the next chapter. He cites two main causes for the disintegration of the former era of childlike certitude. If the age of faith was followed by the age of doubt, and this age of doubt was succeeded by the age of reason, two things or rather factors, are responsible for it: *Kant*, the Koenigsberg philosopher, and *modern science*. Not as though he wanted to blame Kant. He has a great admiration for him, he devotes nearly a whole chapter to the man, who in his "Critique of Pure Reason" produced a philosophical book which the author considers the most powerful of its kind since Aristotle. Kant taught that the only knowledge we really have is phenomenal, i. e. we know how things appear to us. We don't know things in themselves. What we perceive with our senses, is worked over by our minds according to a number of categories, so that the picture we see is not a mere reproduction of the object but one in which our mind has had a constitutive part.

In the same "Critique" Kant undertakes to show that we can have no adequate knowledge of supersensual realities. He, therefore, considers the usual proofs for the existence of God and finds them all inadequate. After thus "dissolving knowledge" of super-rational things, he "makes room for faith" (as he expressed it) in his "Critique of Practical Reason." Here he "postulates" a God in order to safeguard the moral order of the world. There must be a God because only he,

on a higher plane, could right the wrongs of this world and give moral man a chance to reach perfection.

The writer charges Kant with bringing subjectivism and therefore, uncertainty into the intellectual and religious world. Perhaps he did, we say, but if so, it couldn't be helped, for if the age of faith believed that the reality of God could be demonstrated it was mistaken and the time had to come when one would point out this mistake.

The work of disillusion begun by Kant was carried on by modern science. In the world of science the ordinary man feels baffled. A gulf seems to be fixed between the Power that wields the universe and his puny life. The vastness of the universe as revealed by astronomy is so overpowering that it is hard to believe that there could be any room in it for the individual's small affairs. Besides, the onward march of the natural forces shows an entire indifference to human concerns. The author now seeks to help the "plain man" to find his bearings in this new world of science. As a believer in evolution he seeks to show that evolution is God's way of creation; that beyond it all there must be a purpose and a goal; that the order of the world and its laws seem to point to an intelligence, a lawgiver. Faith in some kind of a God, he says, can be made convincingly clear, although not in a God of love and redemption.

There are, however, not only facts in life and nature, but also *values*, of old times summed up in the trinity of the good, true and beautiful. These values are recognized, not made by the individual. Our sense of values is produced by objects. Man's consciousness of values is pointing to the reality of values, it is a kind of evidence. The presence of the ideal is the reality of God within us. The world's history is witness to the reality of a moral order. If *persons* only can comprehend, then personal activity only can create values: then God must be personal. The writer attempts to solve the difficulties in the conception of a personal God who is at the same time infinite, transcending the limits of human personality.

He labors hard by inductive approach (in the scientific field) and by drawing on the life of religious leaders to remove the obstacles to faith in God for the plain man. He makes it very plausible that a world of law and order, a world of progress from lower to higher forms of life cannot be the product of blind material forces only. He doesn't fail to take note of the fact that scientists increasingly admit the possibility of a spiritual interpretation of reality. He stresses the fact that the moral values found in life and appreciated only by persons, point to the creative activity of a personal source. But he disappoints us in a very important matter. You can't argue a man into religion. Most people's objection to, or lack of interest in, religion does not arise from intellectual difficulties, certainly not with the plain man. Why spend so much time on Kant and evolution and modern science and the sense of values, and be silent on the main source and most successful avenue to religious certainty, *the Word of God?* If God cannot be found in his own revelation, where then can we hope to find him? If the voice of God doesn't move the plain man, what will? And

the Word of God means to us mostly Jesus Christ. The writer has one and a half pages on Jesus. Prayer is hardly mentioned, as far as we have seen. If the plain man seeks God, here is the place to find him. If theologians are trying to help the plain man to find God, are they going to take him to science and nature and philosophy and never confront him with the Word of God and with Jesus Christ?